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The Hung Society

Vol. II.



A STATUE OF A LOHAN, ONE OF THE APOSTLES OF THE BUDDA.
(T'ang Period. 618—906 A.D.)

The Hung Society

OR

The Society of Heaven and Earth

BY

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PREFACE.



IN this second volume I have endeavoured to show that the Ceremony of the Hung Society is an allegory of the Journey of the Soul through the Underworld and Paradise to the City of the Gods. In order to do this satisfactorily it has been necessary to collect and co-ordinate traditions, beliefs and legends which deal with this theme as found among races in various parts of the world, and in different stages of evolution. The remarkable manner in which certain outstanding features appear again and again presents a problem which will doubtless be answered in different ways by various students. Some will see therein evidence in support of the theory that far back in the distant past there was a great civilisation, possibly centred in Atlantis, whence these beliefs and others of a religious nature, together with many social customs, spread among the more backward races who came into contact with this earlier civilisation. Therefore when Atlantis vanished her heritage was carried by her successors into every corner of the world by cultural migrations. Another school of thought will consider that, while there is no evidence at all for the existence of Atlantis, this similarity of beliefs points to a time, far back in the past, when our primitive ancestors were all gathered together in some central spot. Thence, as they spread North, South, East and West, they carried with them the original basis, which they developed in various ways, but naturally retained many of the basic ideas, from which their more complex beliefs evolved. To a third group of students it will appear that human nature is very much the same in all types of men, and that the human brain always works along very similar lines. Thus while these various legends may have grown up perfectly independently of each other, this characteristic of the human mind will tend to produce similar ideas, even though there is no intercommunication.

Finally, another school of thought will be of the opinion that in the course of ages members of various races and tribes have come into touch with other groups, and have passed on certain fundamental ideas, which, being accepted by those with whom they have come into contact, in a few generations became so welded into the current traditions of the tribe, and so coloured by local conditions, that to-day it is impossible to identify their original source.

My readers will adopt which explanation most appeals to them, but they will no doubt agree with me in the view that this unanimity of belief on a problem concerning which it is difficult to obtain actual facts is evidence of

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the truth of the dictum that, despite differences of religion, race and colour, in the fundamentals of life all the human race is one, and it is no empty saying that all men are brothers, even though, as it is admirably expressed in the Hung ritual, some may be "*elder*", and others "*younger*," brethren.

In conclusion I have to thank the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office for his kind permission to reproduce from Mr. Bushell's valuable book, *Chinese Art*, published by the Victoria and Albert Museum, illustrations number iv, v, xvii, xxvii, xxviii, xxix, and xxxiii, and also acknowledge a like courtesy by the Director of the British Museum, who has permitted the reproduction of numbers i, xv, xviii, xix, xx, xxxiv, xxxvi, xxxvii, xxxviii, xxxix, xl, xli, xlii, xliii, and xliv. Without the help of these two great museums it would have been impossible adequately to illustrate this volume.

J.S.M.W.



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CHAPTER I.

CHINESE BUDDHISM AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE HUNG RITUAL.



IN the last chapter of the first Volume it was suggested that the journey described by the Vanguard was really that of the soul through the Underworld after death, and the main task of this volume will be to prove the truth of this contention. In the process we shall find that practically every important incident in the journey occurs in various legends current in different parts of the world which deal with the same theme. In particular we shall meet with the "Bridge of Iron and Brass," not only among primitive races, but even in the folk lore of our own country, and the peaches purchased by the Hung Heroes in the Market Place of Universal Peace have their counterpart in the pomegranate of Persephone, and in similar gifts mentioned in legends related by quite primitive races. This bringing together of the traditions of what befalls man after death will be of great service to students of comparative religions, as also to those who are seeking light on the meaning of the Higher Degrees of the Masonic Order.

Before wandering far from the Celestial Empire, it is essential that we should endeavour to disentangle the various religious influences which have combined to produce the ritual of the Hung Society. Of these Chinese Buddhism undoubtedly ranks first, and much in the ritual which has been obscure becomes clear once we have obtained even an elementary knowledge of this truly vast subject. In order to understand the original purpose of this Ancient Mystery Rite it will be necessary for us to study briefly the orthodox conceptions held by the majority of the Chinese on the subject of the after life, and it is impossible to do so without going into their fundamental beliefs concerning the Eternal Verities. This we will do at greater length than will be necessary in the case of the other races whose legends we shall subsequently consider, although it must be remembered that this is not intended to be a work dealing with the various religious systems of the world, or even the various beliefs held by men as to the conditions of life beyond the grave. Its object is limited to an attempt to elucidate what the Triad ceremonies mean, and therefore, avoiding a dissertation on Buddhism, we will merely consider those essentials which will enable us to understand the religious atmosphere in which the Triad ritual has evolved.

Furthermore, it is important to bear in mind that among the lowest classes of Society in China Taoism is, perhaps, more influential than Buddhism, and even the latter is somewhat debased by being overlaid with a mass of

exorcisms, charms, and the like. In addition, there is also Confucianism to be considered. This is a kind of semi-atheistic philosophy with a strong touch of ancestor worship, although its influence on the Triad ritual is less marked than popular Buddhism and Taoism. The latter and Confucianism we shall consider in a subsequent chapter, but from the very start it must be understood that Taoism and Buddhism in China have become so intermingled, not only in the Triad ritual, but in the popular religious beliefs outside, that it is almost impossible to-day to disentangle the separate parts and allocate each precisely to its own religion.

The original founder of Buddhism was a real historical character, Siddhartha Gautama, who was born in Northern India about B.C. 620, at Magadha, on the borders of Nepal, and died at Kusinagara in Oudh about B.C. 548. He was a Prince and heir to the throne, and gave up his royal position to become a mendicant, that he might discover "The Way of Emancipation," not only for himself, but for all men. The verdict of everyone who has studied his life and teachings is that no other man save our own Christ lived such a spotless life, and those who desire to learn more concerning this most loveable of religious teachers cannot do better than read Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia*.

After Buddha's death His religion spread far and wide, and the great Indian Emperor, Asoka, made it the official religion of his Empire. This Emperor began his reign in B.C. 272, although he was not crowned until three years later, and ruled for 40 years. During his conquest of the Kingdom of Kalinga, the modern Northern Circars, in B.C. 261, he saw at close quarters the horrors of war, and it made such an impression on his mind that it turned him from worldly conquests to religion. For all that, he did not abandon his duties as a King, but rather altered his conception of Kingship and henceforth became an active supporter of Buddhism, using his immense influence to spread it far and wide. In the process, however, the original Buddhist system was transformed to a considerable extent. The services were made more ornate and ceremonial, new conceptions were incorporated and old pre-Buddhist beliefs were absorbed. From this date two distinct schools of Buddhism arose; the Southern, which claimed to teach the original simple faith of Buddha, and the Northern, which had a more complex system of beliefs and more elaborate ceremonial. These schools of thought became known as the *Maha Yana*, meaning the *Great Vehicle*, or the *Broad Path*, and the *Hima Yana*,—the *Little Vehicle* or *Narrow Path*. The former is the Buddhist school which spread into China, and hence the fact that the Middle Path in the Triad Ritual is called the *broadest*, may have a reference to the Great Vehicle, or Broad Path of Buddhism.

The phrase, the *Middle Path*, in like manner no doubt refers to the "Middle Path" taught by Buddha. This was the path which lay between the two extremes of excessive asceticism, such as was practised by his contem-

poraries, the Hindu sages, and the lax, luxurious and immoral path followed by the worldly. In short, Buddha taught moderation in all things. Although, however, there is doubtless a reference to the Middle Path of Buddha, I consider the phrase has an alternative, or perhaps we should say, an inner meaning: e.g., it is the Middle Path followed by the Soul which goes to the Dark Lands, in contradistinction to the paths followed by the Tomb Soul and the Ancestral Soul respectively, but this is just what we should expect in a Mystery Rite.

Buddhism in China, therefore, evolved from the more ceremonial form encouraged by Asoka, which spread Northward, via Tibet. The first mention of Buddhism in China was after the return of the Chinese envoy, Chang Ch'ien, from his long journey to Central Asia in B.C. 126, but the first official recognition, and its real establishment, dates from A.D. 67, and was undoubtedly considerably influenced by the writings of Asvaghosha, who probably lived during the first century A.D.. In A.D. 67 it is recorded that the Emperor Ming Ti¹ saw in a vision a golden figure floating in a halo of light, and was told by some of his ministers that it must be an apparition of Buddha, whereupon he sent envoys to India, who returned to his capital, Lo Yang, in A.D. 72, accompanied by two Indian monks, having collected Sanskrit copies of the Scriptures. The Sanskrit books were forthwith translated, and Buddhist figures and scenes painted on the walls of his palace and on those of the new Temple which he erected in honour of Buddha. This Temple was called the *Pai Ma Ssu*, i.e., the *White Horse Temple*, ostensibly in memory of the horse which carried the sacred relics across Asia.²

Now it is highly probable that among the works collected at that time were the writings of Asvaghosha, including his *Life of the Buddha*. The sage was already famous at that date, and in view of the obvious influence his writings have had on Chinese Buddhism, there is every reason to think that it was at this date that the Chinese Embassy came into touch with him, and with men of his school of thought. In any case, Chinese Buddhism tended more and more to draw its inspiration from the Northern school, and was but little influenced by the Southern school, whose chief representatives today are Burma, Siam, and Ceylon. It is usual to say that Northern Buddhism is a "corrupt" form of Buddhism, and that the Southern school teaches the pure faith, but in my opinion this dictum needs considerable qualification. It may be admitted that Burmese Buddhism is nearer to the original form enunciated by Gautama Buddha, but it is possible to argue that in some features Northern Buddhism is a natural and beneficial evolution of faith, and some of its tenets are nearer the ultimate truth than were the earlier, and more tentative, speculations. Thus the conception of a Supreme Being and of a definite personal soul are

¹ Hence the first Emperor in China who encouraged Buddhism had the name *Ming*, which plays so prominent a part in the Hung Ritual.

² For a full discussion of the White Horse, see Vol. III.

more noticeable in Northern Buddhism than in the original teaching of Buddha, but it is more correct to say that they have developed out of the somewhat nebulous views of the Great Teacher than that they contradict His teaching.

It is usual for Western Scholars to state that Buddha had no conception of a Supreme Being, that His heaven—Nirvana—meant annihilation, and that He considered that man had no soul. In support of these dicta, passages are quoted from the supposed teachings of Buddha, or from those of learned Buddhist divines, but whatever the Western theorist may say, in practice I have never met a Buddhist who acknowledged these views, and, after all, this is the real test. The Burmese are of the strictest school, and pride themselves on following exactly the original teachings of their Master, yet when one penetrated beyond the fine distinctions they tried to make I found that they undoubtedly *did* believe in a Supreme Being, that Nirvana was *not* annihilation, and that men and even animals were believed to have something which survived death, and corresponded with what *we* call the soul. The truth of the matter was that their conceptions of these three factors were different from those held in the West, and often more spiritual. They considered our idea of God too limited and anthropomorphic to be correct. God is vaster than Jehovah, more all-embracing, and, in short, not very different from the conception held by the more enlightened Hindus, who know Him under the name of Paramatma. They could, and did, draw distinctions between their conception and that of the Hindus, but these consisted largely in what we in the West would call "hair-splitting," a tendency engrained in the Oriental, nor can it be denied that when one reaches the higher flights of Mysticism no two men can agree on a definition which will exactly express their own beliefs on these recondite subjects.

In the case of the Chinese Buddhists with whom I conversed, their views were even closer to our own than were those of the Burmese, and for all practical purposes we can consider them as similar, and leave to the precisionists the impossible task of trying to distinguish exactly wherein they differ from us on such points. In China the Buddhists practically regard this Supreme Being as represented by Adi-Buddha, Who is one universally diffused Essence, and the historic Gautama Buddha as a temporal and individualised manifestation of the All-Pervading, who came to earth to help men, while they themselves have within them a portion of that All-Pervading Essence, which corresponds to what the Christian mystic understands by "The Divine Spark within us." Hence, potentially, every man can become a Buddha, and the Divine Spark once more be merged in the Limitless. This is Nirvana, and it is not extinction, rather it is an expansion beyond the limitations and illusions of time, space and form. The Chinese, at any rate, emphasise the fact that Nirvana is "Pure joy and permanence"—which is certainly not extinction. Buddha is supposed to have said—"It may be compared to the absence of some-

thing different from itself."¹ As the Rev. S. Beale justly says: "The difference between the destruction of all elements of *limited* existence, and the cessation of being, is a distinct one and perfectly recognisable . . . as it is full of joy, and pure and permanent, and in a high sense a personal one, it affords a sufficient motive for what the Pekin priest described as the basis of all religions—correct and virtuous conduct." Moreover, during the 4th century A.D., a further development took place, as a result of which there appeared a school of Buddhist thought which taught of a divine, yet personal Saviour, Amitabha Buddha, through *faith* in whom all men could be saved. This School has profoundly influenced the Hung ritual.

Finally, as to the question of the soul, we must remember that the Western nations do not distinguish between the different parts of the non-physical portion of man as do many other races. While it is quite possible to disagree with such ideas, the thesis that the non-physical part of a man may consist of several portions, some more permanent than others, is a perfectly intelligible one. The Egyptians divided a man into at least seven parts, of which only one was the physical body, and it appears as if they considered that of the remaining six parts some could perish and yet leave the others alive. If we conceive of the Soul as itself a husk within which there exists a formless something—the Spirit—a Divine Spark of the All-Embracing and Everlasting Essence of the Supreme Being, we shall see that, as the latter approaches the end of its spiritual journey, it is very probable that it will shed its ethereal husk, just as that husk shed its physical body. This more accurately defines the Buddhist conception of the Soul than does our own somewhat crude division of man into three,—Body, Soul and Spirit. The Chinese, in short, subdivide what we call the Soul into many parts, and are prepared to admit that some of these parts may not reach Nirvana, as they would no longer serve any useful purpose; indeed, are not pure enough to exist in that Celestial State.

Just as it is usual to find Western scholars declaring that Buddhism does not acknowledge the existence of the Soul, despite the clear evidence of their ceremonies and customs that the Buddhists actually do, so it is usual to say that Buddhism is not a religion. Herein again I venture to think that their definition of religion is based too exclusively on Western and Semitic conceptions. Judged even by these, it is impossible to deny the name of religion to Chinese Buddhism, and I would go further and say that the same is true of even the strictest forms of Buddhism, such as the Burmese.

What is religion? Is it not worship of something above oneself; faith, and ceremonies connected therewith? The Buddhist prays, has set ceremonies, and believes that according to the purity, or sinfulness, of his life, he

¹Here, and in many other subsequent parts of this section, I must express my indebtedness to the admirable little book by the Rev. S. Beal, *Buddhism in China*. It is one of the fairest summaries of this complicated subject which I have ever read.

will be rewarded or punished here, or hereafter. Wherein then does his conception of religion differ from ours? It is quite true that his religion is founded upon philosophy, and that an advanced form of philosophy, but this does not prevent it from being a religion. There is a Christian Philosophy also, and, indeed, no religion could hold the more educated section of its followers if it had not a philosophical basis. If the above is true of the more advanced beliefs held by the educated classes in the Buddhist faith, it is even more clearly marked among the populace who worship definite and personal Deities, as did the Greeks and Romans: and just as the classical Gods were controlled by a vague conception called *Fate*, so the Chinese Gods are controlled by a benign and less vague Power, Whom they sometimes speak of as Adi-Buddha, and sometimes by the term "Tien," Heaven. There is also Shang Ti, who at times approaches very nearly to the Jewish conception of Jehovah, and whose name seems to have been one of the original names for the Supreme Being. To-day He is seldom mentioned except by the Taoists, but in the Triad ritual we continually get references to Heaven in a way which shows that *Tien* is regarded as being almost personal in character, as, for example, when the monks found the Precious Censor and said, "It is the will of Heaven." A Mahommedan under like circumstances would have said, "It is the will of Allah," and the Christian, "It is the will of God."

A little later we will consider one of the services regularly held in China, which is not unique but is of special interest to us as it is connected with Kwan Yin, who symbolises the Divine mercy: if this service is not "worship" then neither is any Church service. Many will consider that our conception is higher and better than that of the Chinese, but this does not justify us in denying that to them Buddhism is more than a philosophy of life, it is a definite religion, with dogmas and ceremonies, just as we have in Christianity.

BUDDHIST INFLUENCE ON THE TRIAD RITUAL.

The above facts once realised, we shall be able to see more clearly the probable origin of the Triad ritual, and shall perceive that its various parts and interpretations are explicable by the beliefs current among the Buddhists and Taoists, who form the bulk of the Society. The ritual has, as it were, at least four interpretations or "keys." (a) Moral: (b) Political: (c) Allegorical, the journey of the Soul through the Underworld towards Paradise: and (d) Mystical, the return of the Soul to the Source of All. These interpretations are not alternative, but lie one within the other, a feature found in similar Rites elsewhere, and we shall consider each in turn, bearing in mind that the Political interpretation is probably a late addition, as is shown by the fact that it is but little in evidence in the second half of the ceremony—or ceremony proper, namely, the Mystical Journey, although it may appear to have influenced the

Traditional History. Even there without some knowledge of the history of the growth of Buddhism in China and of its trials and persecutions it would be difficult to appreciate fully how the Political aim developed, while without some conception of Chinese Buddhism and Taoism the whole ceremony is largely meaningless.

Among educated Chinese, Buddhism and Taoism alike are largely mystical, even though the more ignorant may interpret many of the descriptions of Paradise and Purgatory in a literal sense—a failing noticeable among some Christians in the 18th and in the first half of the 19th centuries. The mystical interpretation will be dealt with later, and the moral teaching is usually fairly obvious. A Hung brother must be loyal and true, honour his parents and not oppress the weak. He has special and peculiar obligations to his brethren and their relations, which in many cases are specifically mentioned and enforced in the thirty-six oaths, and in the laws of the Society. This key, therefore, need not detain us long, but we will here and now show all four interpretations applied to the same word.

Ming is the name of the Chinese Dynasty which was overthrown by the Manchus, but also means *Light*. Hence "*To restore Ming*" means:—(a) *Morally*. To turn towards a pure life. (b) *Politically*. To restore the old Chinese Dynasty. (c) *Allegorically*. To journey towards Heaven, the place of Light. (d) *Mystically*. To restore the rule of the Divine Spark within us.

Let us now consider briefly the history of the spread of Buddhism in China, which will, at any rate partly, explain the interpolation of a political aim into the Triad rituals. From A.D. 67 to about A.D. 770, there was a continual stream of missionaries coming into China from Northern India, who brought with them copies of the Sacred Books, and at length, in the year A.D. 684, ^(*) these latter were gathered together into a definite body of Sacred writings. The growth of Buddhism had indeed been remarkable. By A.D. 885 the Chinese were permitted by the authorities to take Monastic vows, and we learn that at that time there were at least 42 monasteries in Lo Yang alone. But the new faith was not without opposition, particularly from the Confucians, who represented the official religion, and about A.D. 680, under the Tangs, a persecution took place, the first of the four severe persecutions which Buddhists have suffered in China. The man responsible seems to have been Fu-yi, one of the ministers of Kaou Tsu, the first Tang Emperor, who declared that monks and nuns, by avoiding marriage, impoverished the state; that what they taught was all lies, and they themselves were idle drones. As a result, a short-lived persecution broke out, but the storm soon passed, and despite minor outbreaks it was not until A.D. 714 that the second serious persecution took place. At that time more than 12,000 monks were compelled to resume secular life and the building of Buddhist Temples was forbidden. By A.D.

(*) Rev. S. Beal, *Buddhism in China*, pp. 90 sq.

768, however, we find Buddhism once more in favour, and not merely tolerated but even encouraged by the Emperor.^(a)

The third and severest of these early persecutions started in A.D.845, in which year the Emperor Wu Tsung issued an edict ordering the destruction of all monasteries, and the return to secular life of the monks and nuns. The records state that 4,600 greater monasteries, and 40,000 lesser ones were destroyed. The Monastic property was confiscated, and the copper bells and images melted down and turned into coins. The number of monks and nuns who were forced to return to secular life is recorded as 260,000. Wu Tsung's successor reversed this policy, however, and granted absolute toleration, and by the end of the 18th century, in the reign of Kublai Khan, a census gives the total number of Buddhist temples as over 42,000, and of monks as 218,000. So far we have been dealing with ancient history, and it was not until the middle of the 17th century that the Chinese authorities departed from this tolerant attitude, but the change which then took place is important, and probably explains why a mystical, religious Rite developed into a great secret society animated by feelings of bitter hostility towards the reigning Dynasty.

Kang Hsi (or Kang-hi), the second Sovereign of the new Manchu Dynasty, the Chings (or Ts'ings), in 1662 issued the so-called *Sacred Edict*, in which he charged the Buddhists with fabricating groundless tales about future happiness and misery. He roundly declared that they did this solely for personal gain. "Encouraging for the same object large gatherings of the country population at the Temples, ostensibly to burn incense, but really to promote mischief,"^(b) According to the Rev. S. Beal, even as late as 1884 one of the 16 lectures contained in this Edict was publicly read at the periods of the New and Full Moon, in the Temple of the Patron God of each Chinese city. It was done in a somewhat perfunctory manner by the Town Clerk, supported by the local Government officials, in the presence of a few rustics. In it the monks were declared to be drones who lived on the industry of others, and the people were warned not to attend their temples or take part in their festivals. Actually no one paid the slightest heed to these warnings, which by 1884 had become a pure formality, and the Buddhist Temples were everywhere flourishing and well supported, but there is no doubt that when first issued by Kang Hsi the Edict was vigorously enforced and the Buddhists suffered severely. Resentment at such treatment would very naturally be increased by the fact that for 800 years the Buddhists had been left in peace, and the additional fact that it was a new and alien Dynasty which had issued the Edict would unite their religious fervour with any natural dislike which they might already feel for a foreign Dynasty.

We can see at once why this alien and persecuting Ts'ing Dynasty should be compared unfavourably with the old tolerant and genuine Chinese Mings

(a) Rev. S. Beal, *Buddhism in China*, p. 92—97.

(b) *Ibid*, p. 96.

and how a legend which once related a purely allegorical tragedy might quickly become identified with the active persecution then raging.¹

Nor were the Buddhists the only people who felt the heavy hand of Kang Hsi, who reigned from 1662—1722, for he also issued severe Edicts against the Taoist Priests at the same time. He ordered that any Magician or Taoist who should prescribe enchantments or charms for sick people should be brought before the Board of Punishments, while any patient calling in their aid should also be punished.² He forbade Taoist processions or ceremonies, and further ordered that members of the following Societies should be treated as criminals:—the White Lily, the Hung, the Incense Burners, the Origin of Chaos, and the Origin of the Dragon.^(a)

Who exactly all these Societies were it is difficult to say, but it seems probable that, like the Hung, they were Societies which had initiation rites. In the case of the White Lily³ Society, it seems as if it were connected with the Hung, if it was not merely that Society under a different name. These facts are important as they show that the Taoists and Buddhists, who at one time had been rivals, were both subjected at this date to severe persecution. Adversity would strengthen the bonds of union and the tendency to amalgamate, which had already become evident during the long period of toleration. Still more important is the fact that the Emperor at the same time singled out certain Societies by name, including the Hung, or Triad, Society, and associated them with his religious persecution.

Whether or not the actual incident mentioned in the Traditional History ever took place, a point we shall consider later, these undoubted historical facts are sufficient to explain why a Society, which until then was probably no more than a quasi-religious organisation, incorporating ideas collected from Buddhism and Taoism, should be changed into a revolutionary, political organisation. The legend would soon become tinged with political references,

¹A similar fate appears to have overtaken the old story of William Tell. The main incident, i.e., shooting the apple on the boy's head, is found in stories all over the world, including England and Scotland, while on the other hand historians have been unable to find any historical evidence for the existence of either Tell or even Gessler. As far back as 1700 Pastor Freudenberger, a Protestant Pastor of Bern, issued an anonymous pamphlet entitled *William Tell, a Danish Fable*. This book was promptly burnt by the hangman, by order of the authorities of the Canton of Uri, and even to-day, the average Swiss, despite the overwhelming evidence of later historical research, refuses to credit the fact that the story is not a record of actual facts. No doubt an old legend was intermingled with the historical events and personages who actually organised the revolt of the Swiss peasants against the Hapsburgs which culminated in the battle of Morgarten, on Nov. 15th, 1315. If this could take place as late as the 14th century in Europe, and be accepted as true history down to the middle of the 19th century, there is nothing improbable in the view that a similar amalgamation of history and legend took place in the 17th century in China.

²Even before this date an attack had been made on the Taoists by an Edict of 1686, which ordered their suppression. In justice to the Emperor we must admit that the Taoist Charms and Spells were viewed with contempt by the educated classes, but the attack on them and on the Buddhists seems unjust and unwise, though doubtless reforms were desirable.

³Or White Lotus.

(a) See Prof. R. E. Douglas in *Confucianism and Taoism*, p. 255.

and the allegorical journey to Heaven would tend to become restricted to those who would fight the oppressor and, hence, like Mahommed's Paradise, be reserved for those who vowed themselves as Soldiers of the Cause. In short, the Hung Heaven would become the reward of the Red Knights who fell fighting against the foreign tyrants who were striving to destroy both Buddhism and Taoism.

One last point is worth considering: does the Traditional History, which is now given outside the door of the Lodge, really contain the substance of the ritual of the White Lily Society, and is the ceremony which takes place inside, the ritual of the old Hung Society? This seems more than probable, and we shall consider the point more fully later. There are many indications in Chinese History that at this period there existed not one, but two great and powerful Societies, which ultimately amalgamated. J. Keelson^(a) gives an account of two distinct Societies which he calls "The Pe-lin-kiao" and "The Tien-Ti Hoi'h". Concerning the latter there is no doubt as to its identity, for it is the Hung Society, and this name, meaning "The Society of Heaven and Earth," is still used by it, but was the Pe-lin-kiao the same organisation under a different name, or a separate though allied, body? At first sight the former seems probable, but the secular history of the period suggests that it was distinct, and had its headquarters in the Northern Provinces, whereas the Tien-Ti-Hoi'h had its centre in the South. Against this must be set the fact that the White Lotus was established at Rozan on the Yang Tse River, in A.D. 886.^(b) Probably they were two degrees of the same Rite.¹

According to the secular records, there was a definite rising of the Pe-lin-kiao in 1774, which was crushed and its leader, Wang Lung, executed, together with many of his followers. It is more than probable that we have a recollection of this defeat and of the death of the real leader in the legend, although the date of the traditional rising has been shifted back, and the manner of the death of the leader somewhat altered, namely, in the legend he died in battle, whereas Wang Lung was captured and executed. According to historic records the Pei-lin-kiao made another effort five years later, in 1777, but was again crushed, and we hear no more of it until about 1880, when it had apparently changed its name to "Tsing-lien-kiao," then it seems to vanish from history, but the Tien-Ti-Hoi'h suddenly increased in importance, and henceforth appears to be the sole representative of this type of powerful secret Society.

On the other hand, the Tien-Ti-Hoi'h was certainly in existence in 1799, and in 1807 an Edict was issued against it under the name of *Tien-Haw-Hoi'h* meaning, *The Society of the Queen of Heaven*, so that at this period both it and the old Pe-lin-kiao were existing independently and contemporaneously.

¹Like the Craft and Royal Arch in the Masonic System.

^(a)J. Keelson, *The Cross and the Dragon*.

^(b)See Vol. I. p. 4.

While therefore we must acknowledge the possibility of both names being aliases of the same Society, on the whole there seems a strong presumption that they were originally distinct, and that after 1880 the Pe-lin-kiao united with the Hung Society, and its legend became the preliminary degree for the ceremony of the latter. These facts would explain why a long legend is given outside the door instead of being related inside the Lodge. Originally a complete initiation in itself, at the amalgamation the much weaker Pe-lin-kiao had to be content with its ceremony being truncated and merely given verbally, with no elaborate ceremony. We shall return to this matter later, but it has been necessary to go into the point even here, as when studying the history of Buddhism in China we are thus enabled to see how its fate has influenced the history, and even the ritual, of the Hung Society.

Having sketched the early history and development of Chinese Buddhism, we will now turn to consider certain peculiar features of it which have left their mark on the Triad rituals and explain certain otherwise obscure passages. Moreover, we cannot entirely ignore the Taoist influence, although in the main the ceremonies are Buddhist. In its original form, and even at a later date among its more educated followers, the outstanding feature of Taoism is the belief that our good and bad deeds are rewarded or punished here and now, and consequently, if there is not an actual denial of survival after death, there is no coherent teaching on that subject, except where it has clearly been borrowed from Buddhism. Since the main features of the Triad ritual deal with this theme, it clearly cannot be Taoist in origin. For all that there are certain Taoist Deities invoked, and, as we shall perceive presently, Taoism had evolved an Earthly Paradise not unlike the Island of the ritual. The Buddhists also had a similar Earthly Paradise and so we cannot definitely regard this as a contribution by Taoism, but we may suspect a certain amount of blending of ideas.

年 洪
武

REGAL TITLE OF HUNG WU,
1868-98.

CHAPTER II.

KWAN YIN.



THE chief subject of our next consideration, however, will be the Goddess Kwan Yin, whose worship has clearly had considerable influence in the evolution of the ceremony, where she accompanies the Hung Heroes in their boat to the Happy Isle, which Island itself is undoubtedly that Earthly Paradise where she reigns with Amitabha Buddha. Concerning the latter, beliefs are neither vague nor Pantheistic: He is as definite a personality as is the Christ, and, like Him, is considered by His followers to be Divine. Indeed, there are good reasons for suspecting that Amitabha Buddha's appearance in the teaching of the 4th century is due to the influence on Buddhism in China of Nestorian Christians, who at that time existed in considerable numbers in that country.

Kwan Yin is a contraction for Kwan-Shi-yin which means, *One who hears the cries of men*, and she is usually called the Goddess of Mercy. The Indian version of her name is *Avalokitesvara*, which means, *The Looking-down God*, and no doubt indicates that he was originally considered as dwelling on the mountain tops, from which he could see and hear all. In the earlier (Indian) traditions this God seems to have been male, not female, and even still statues of him as a male being are to be found. Nor need this fact greatly surprise us, since the statues were originally merely attempts to visualise a more or less abstract principle, i.e., mercy. In like manner the Indian Goddess Kali is usually depicted as female, and is said to be the spouse of Siva, yet I have seen a few statues of Kali in the form of a male being, and no doubt originally this God was a personification of the just wrath of Siva, who later became amalgamated in the popular mind with some old underworld Goddess of the Dravidians, and henceforth was usually depicted as the wife of Siva.

A similar transformation has taken place in China with Avalokitesvara, and we have reason for suspecting that the Buddhist Divine Being, an emanation of Adi-Buddha, has been merged with some local, or possibly a foreign, Goddess. The Rev. S. Beal considers that originally this God came from South Arabia and was Al-Makah, *The God Who Harkens*, and that he was brought first to Ceylon, where he became associated with the Sacred Mountain, now known as Adam's Peak, whereon is the reputed footprint of Buddha. Thence he considers that the God travelled North to Tibet, and so on to China, or he may have gone there direct by the sea route. His arguments are strong, and while I am not prepared to say that they are the only explanation, I do think that to a considerable extent Kwan Yin, and more especially her Paradise



KWAN YIN MAKING A SIGN OF THE
HUNG SOCIETY.

in the West, show traces of Arab, and possibly even of Egyptian, influence. We cannot, however, ignore the possibility that Avalokitesvara merged with the Taoist Divinity Hsi Wang Mu, the Royal Mother of the West, and produced the Chinese Kwan Yin, and in some ways this seems more than probable. It does not, however, preclude the possibility that Avalokitesvara himself originally came to India from South Arabia, and was only changed into a Goddess in China, although on the other hand, there seems no reason why he should not have been evolved independently by the Northern Buddhists, from some local Mountain God of the Himalayas.

Kwan Yin, however, is usually associated with another Divine Being, Amitabha, and their residence is supposed to be in Sukhavati, the Land of the Blest. This name comes from Sukhadhara, the modern Socotra,^(a) an island off the East coast of Africa, which probably forms the geographical foundation for the Island of the Ka, described in the Egyptian tale of the *Shipwrecked Mariner*.¹ This island was well known to the early Arab traders who used Ceylon as an important trading centre and considered Socotra to be one of the most beautiful and fertile spots on earth, which indeed it was, especially for men whose own homes were in the dried up deserts of Arabia. It is easy, therefore, to see why the ancient Egyptians should regard it as a kind of Earthly Paradise, and why the Arabs should carry with them to Ceylon a garbled account of its beauties, which in due course, would lead the Chinese to use its name for the Paradise where Kwan Yin and Amitabha dwelt.

As this island is no doubt the origin of the Isle of the Blest in the Triad ritual, we will now consider what Kwan Yin's Paradise (which lay in the West, as does Socotra) was like. When doing so we must also remember that the Taoist Earthly Paradise was also in the West, on an Island, and was considered to be in this world. Amitabha, under the corrupted form of the name O-mi-to, is said to reign in the Western Paradise, together with his daughter Kwan Yin.² Amitabha means, *Boundless Glory, or Light*, he is also called Amitayus, meaning, *The Eternal*. Kwan Yin, on the other hand, is associated with water,³ and is depicted sitting near a waterfall,^(b) while Dr. Edkins says that at P'uto she is worshipped under the epithet of Kwo-hai, which means, *She who came across the Sea*. The importance of this phrase is twofold, firstly, it suggests that her worship may have come from a foreign country, brought to China by sea-faring men, possibly from Persia; and secondly, it undoubtedly refers to her Paradise beyond the Western seas.

¹See Chapter XII. Mr. Golenischeff, who first translated the Papyrus, considered that the Island of the Ka originated from reports received by Egyptian travellers to Punt, i.e., Ethiopia, concerning Socotra, and it later became the enchanted island of Ulysses and Sinbad.

²Compare Biame and his daughter in the Australian legend, and Uta-Naphistim and his wife in the Babylonian legend.

³Compare the Masonic waterfall.

^(a)See Rev. S. Beal, *Buddhism in China*. p. 124.

^(b)See Bunyu Nanjio's Catalogue of the Chinese and Japanese books in the Bodleian lib. p. 7.

It is this Paradise which mainly concerns us here. It was the place to which thousands of Chinese Buddhists hoped to go after death, at any rate for a time, before being reborn on earth, and the Sutras describe it as a place where those who are reborn therein have neither griefs nor sorrows. It is adorned with gold and silver and precious gems; there men find pure waters with golden sands, surrounded by pleasant walks, and the lakes are covered with lotus blossoms. In this happy land music is ever heard, flowers rain from heaven, and countless birds sing all day long. Here the name of Hell is unknown and even the trees seem to sing. We are further told that the Buddha who reigns there is named Amitayus, because the length of his life (Ayus) and of those born therein is illimitable (Amita). He is called Amitabhas because His splendour (Abhas) is illimitable (Amita).

To attain to this Paradise the main essential is Faith—faith in Amitabhas—and the invocation of His aid unceasingly. There exist in consequence certain phrases which are repeated over and over again, and which have become practically magical formulas. One such is "Amita Buddha" or "Mi-to" (Amita), and another is "Na-mo-O-mi-to-fuh," meaning, "Praise to Amita Buddha."^(a) We are told that these six words are a complete substitute for the 84,000 Gates of the Law. The word Mi-to is likewise stated to be the secret power which perfects the character. Whoso repeats this word incessantly shall, when about to die, "Behold Amitabha with all His saints appearing before him," and he shall pass away to be re-born in that most blissful Paradise called Sukhavati.^(b)

The Rev. S. Beal describes a Chinese picture of Amitabha under his character of "One who draws as by a rope."¹ He is depicted standing on a lotus, holding a rope in his right hand. "The rope is connected with a *ship* under full sail, evidently crossing the sea to the blissful Paradise. It is full of male and female disciples. The ship is called 'The Boat of Knowledge and Love'; on the flag is an inscription 'The World of Supreme Bliss' (Sukhavati). There is a pendant flag on the bow of the boat, on which is inscribed 'He who draws to the Western regions.' At the post of command is a figure, with an exact representation of a mitre on his head, giving directions and overseeing the crew and passengers, On the sail is the following legend written:—"The one word Mi-to (Amita) is the *Precious Sword* for cutting down the crowd of heretical opinions. The word Mi-to is the method for crushing down the terrors of Hell. The word Mi-to is the *bright lamp* which gives light in darkness. This is the Ship of Love that crosses over the sea of sorrow. This word Mi-to is the *direct road* for escaping the circle (Wheel) of transmigration' . . ." etc.^(c)

¹Compare with the drawing with a rope in the Masonic degree of Royal Ark Mariner, and also with an incident in the R. Arch.

^(a)Rev. S. Beal, *Buddhism in China*. p. 161.

^(b)See *Catena*, page 378.

^(c)Rev. S. Beal, *Buddhism in China*. p. 160—161.

There is further writing on the body of the paper which informs us that "This one method is called 'Seeking to be born in the Western World' (Paradise)," and we are further informed that "Those in the highest state forthwith ascend the *Ladder*¹ of Buddha; (i.e., are in the direct way to perfection). Those in a lower state enjoy the highest bliss of heaven (Deva heaven)".

One of the Buddhist prayers actually offered at a funeral runs as follows:—

"During a long period of time, O Father, Thy fame was on the lips of all in our native place and we were just fervently hoping that an unlimited age would be granted to Thy omniscient virtue, when unexpectedly Thou hast departed to the West, from whence there is no returning, in the barge of Mercy."

On this de Groot has the following comment:—

"Kwan Yin or Avalokitesvara is said by the Buddhist Church in China to convey souls to Paradise in a ship."^(a)

Here then we have the Chinese origin of the Hung Boat and possibly even of some of the objects on the altar, such as the Lamp and the Precious Sword. In the ritual, entrance to that boat, however, has apparently been restricted to Hung Heroes. It must not be forgotten that Kwan Yin was also in the boat accompanying the passengers, and we shall explain later why she was there. It should be noted that although the more ignorant regard this place as a very material Paradise, the more educated spiritualise the conception completely and to them it is a mystical allegory. "Amitabha means, the mind, clear and enlightened. This Paradise is our moral nature, pure and at rest, and the rows of trees surrounding the Paradise symbolise a mind cultivated in the virtues; the music represents harmony in the mind, etc."^(b)

THE HARROWING OF HELL.

We have thus found a complete explanation of the origin of the Hung Boat and of the Isle of the Blest in popular Chinese Buddhist beliefs, let us now, however, consider Kwan Yin herself rather more fully, for it is she who accompanies the Hung heroes on their journey. Why? At Ajanta, in India, is a Buddhist painting of Kwan Yin descending into Hell to rescue therefrom those who are in torment,^(c) and this belief was widespread in China. The descent is described in the *Kāraṇḍa-Vyūha*, which relates that when Buddha was about to address a huge assembly "Suddenly beams of light issued forth in the Hell Avichi."² These beams of light reached the assembly above and "Decorated the

¹Compare with the reference to the ladder of fame in the Triad Ritual and then with the ladder by which Osiris ascended to heaven, the Mexican ladder of Quetzacoatl, and also a similar ladder in a certain Masonic Higher Degree.

²This is the lowest Hell or, as the Chinese significantly call it, Earth Prison; there are eight great Hells and a vast number of side Hells, or Portals, through which the sufferers ultimately escape to rebirth. Buddhist Hells are purgatorial and not places of eternal punishment.

(a)J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*. Vol. I., p. 226.

(b)Edkin, *Chinese Buddhism*. p. 198.

(c)Rev. S. Beal, *Buddhism in China*. p. 141.

whole place" so that the pillars seemed to be adorned with gems and the staircase to be made of gold. Thereupon one of the disciples "*Laid one shoulder bare, knelt on his right knee, placed his hand to his forehead,*" and reverently asked the cause.¹ Buddha told him that Avalokitesvara had just entered the Hell of Avichi, and having delivered the souls in bondage was then entering the City of the Demons.²

The disciple was amazed that the Divine Being should attempt to rescue such evil creatures, and said, (a) "What beings are found in Avichi? Does He preach the law there where no joy is found? Whose *iron* realm, surrounded by *walls and ramparts*, is, as it were, one uninterrupted flame. . . . In that Hell where there is a great wailing caldron wherein myriads of beings are thrown?"³ Buddha replied that nevertheless Avalokitesvara *had* descended in royal pomp, but his body underwent no change, and as he approached this Hell it became cool. He added also that the servants of the King of Hell went to their monarch and told him that their "Field of action" had been destroyed, and had become a place of Joy, because a man "Wearing *matted* locks (?Loose hair down his back) and a diadem", had entered it.⁴ The King of Hell⁵ then saw Avalokitesvara and paid him homage. Ultimately all the sufferers were carried by him into Paradise (Sukhavati).

Now it must be remembered that Kwan Yin is the Chinese form of Avalokitesvara, and, though the sex has been changed, the essential characteristics remain. Hence, among the Chinese it is Kwan Yin who delivers the souls in bondage, and this fact is proved by a peculiar service which is performed in her honour and which the Rev. S. Beal actually witnessed. As the service shows the probable source of many incidents in the Triad ritual, we will now consider it in outline.

SERVICE OF INTERCESSION TO KWAN YIN.

When arranging the temple, the figure of Buddha is placed on an altar on the South side, and one of Kwan Yin on an altar in the West.⁶ A sacred area is then demarcated by scratching a line with a knife on the earthen floor and *pure water* is sprinkled towards each of the cardinal points, i.e., at each corner

¹Compare with the manner of preparation of the Candidate in the Triad ritual.

²Compare with the pit and the City of Dis in Dante and Virgil, especially the former.

³Compare with the cauldron shown in the fresco at Chaldon and with similar incidents in Lucian and in St. Patrick's Purgatory.

⁴The whole account is very reminiscent of the Harrowing of Hell by Christ, as given in the Apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, chapters 16-19.

⁵This monarch is called Yemma, and, like Pluto, is the Ruler of the Underworld, and must not be confounded with the Christian conception of Satan.

⁶J. Keelson in *The Cross and the Dragon* says that in some of the Triad Lodges the figure of Kwan Yin is on the altar, and as the altar, we know, is in the West, this is a further point of interest, and no doubt refers to her Western Paradise.

(a)Rev. S. Beal, *Buddhism in China*. p. 148.

of the area. Next, incense dust is sprinkled over the floor, and finally a silk cord of *five coloured* threads is passed round the area thus marked. This done *lamps, incense sticks, banners, flowers and food offerings* are set out.¹

Before entering worshippers must see that they and their clothes are absolutely clean, and *if not new* they must be the best they possess.² An hour before or after the service there must be no "Mixed conversation,"³ instead the mind should be occupied in meditation on the "*Ten obligations*,"⁴ The service begins by invoking "Compassionate Kwan Yin," and then by inwardly reflecting that "All the Buddhas are the same with myself: it is only because we are self-deceived that we think otherwise. I now come to worship the *precious objects*." Later follows the act of faith, which refers to the promise of Kwan Yin to save men from Hell.

"Though I were cast on a mountain of knives,
It should not hurt me;
Though thrown into a lake of fire,
It should not burn me;
Though hurled down into Hell,
It should not hold me:" etc.

this act concludes with the words

"Yet shall I rise to Heaven!
All Hail, Compassionate Kwan Yin!"^(a)

Ten invocations to Kwan Yin and ten to Amitabha follow, after which the Priest reads from the sacred books how Kwan Yin vowed to deliver all living creatures. Then comes the repetition of the "Sacred words" which are mostly in Sanscrit, and which, though seldom understood by the worshippers, are believed to work perfectly efficaciously—as is always the way with words of power. It is thus quite clear why Kwan Yin accompanies the Hung Heroes in the boat on their journey to the Isle of the Blest;—She has rescued them from a worse fate,⁵ nor can we ignore the possibility that in this

¹ Compare these details with the ceremony of consecrating a Triad Lodge before opening the proceedings, and note, especially, the five coloured threads of silk.

² Compare with the new, or at least *clean*, clothes essential at a Triad Initiation.

³ In like manner some Triad Lodges have a regulation that after the ceremony the brethren must go home quietly, and not indulge in loose talk, or visit low places.

⁴ These are the ten vows of the Monastic Order, i.e., not to kill, not to steal, etc., but in the number and general purpose of them we doubtless get the origin of the ten rules of the Triad Society which, though they vary in detail, are practically always ten in number. It may be that this is also the origin of the statement that the Hung Boat takes ten days to reach the Isle of the Blest.

⁵ Beal thinks there was an interchange of beliefs between Buddhist views on Kwan Yin and the Gnostics. Such would be quite possible, via the Arab traders who plied between Arabia and Ceylon, and so linked up with India and possibly China. It is clear that there are striking similarities between Kwan Yin's descent into Hell and that of "Pistis Sophia," as recorded by *Valentinus*. In it "Pistis Sophia" descended into Hell and many of the details are very similar, especially the 18 *aeons*, which bring to mind the 18 Buddhist Heavens. The number of these Buddhist Heavens is probably the true reason for there being 18 Councillors in every Triad Lodge, and the explanation that they represent the 18 Provinces of China is doubtless a later gloss. In like manner, we see that it would explain the 13 who form the real basis of the Hung League in the legend, though even so this 13 probably comes down from a still earlier Zodiacal belief.

(a) Rev. S. Beal, *Buddhism in China*, pp. 141 & 153.

service we have the exoteric form of the Rite we are now considering, for even in its external form the resemblance to an initiatory Rite is fairly obvious.

That the Paradise of Kwan Yin was believed to be on earth is shown by a story related by I-tsing,¹ although it is possible that he was merely relating an old allegory, under the mistaken belief that it was an actual event. It is supposed to concern a Priest called Shang-ti.² This Priest was a most learned and devout man and greatly longed for the joys of the Western Paradise. After a time he set forth on a long pilgrimage, and ultimately reached the coast, where he embarked on a *ship* which took him to Kalinga, then proceeded to Malaya, and thence set out in another ship for India. A severe storm broke out, however, and the vessel began to founder, whereupon everyone save the Priest and his disciple tried to crowd into a small boat which was near. The Captain called him to come aboard this boat. The Priest refused, saying, "Save the others." He then "Joined his hands in adoration, and, looking towards the West, repeated the sacred Name of Amita, and as the ship went down these were his last words. His disciple remained by his side and likewise was heard to the last calling on Amita."^(a)

BUDDHIST CONCEPTION OF HEAVEN AND HELL.

Having thus learnt what the Buddhists teach concerning Paradise, let us consider their beliefs on the subject of Heaven and Hell, after which we will study the Taoist conceptions on these points. The Buddhists teach that there are in all 18 Heavens³ above the world, and eight great Hells beneath it.⁴ In addition to the great Hells there are numerous side prisons, or borderlands, through which the souls pass on their way from one of the great Hells to re-birth.

The great Hells are ^(b) :—

(1). Sanjiva, in which the souls mangle each other with iron claws, with which they are born instead of with hands and feet.

(2). The *Kāla sutra* Hell: for disobedience to parents.

(3). The *Sanghata* Hell: for hatred, envy and passion.

¹I-tsing was born about A.D. 656, and in A.D. 671 started on a 20 years' pilgrimage through India and the neighbouring countries.

²The name is suspect, for it is similar to that given to the Supreme Being in early Chinese History

³The number probably originated with the idea that the souls go to dwell in the different signs of the Zodiac, and ultimately with the Sun. The belief that the good souls go to the planets, or stars, is fairly general among primitive races; for example, the Bakonga think that the good dead go to the moon.

⁴That is to say 21 plus the earth, making 22, and this is the number of the Tarot cards, a very significant fact. The Tarot cards, we know, came from the East, and although largely used during the Middle ages for purposes of Divination unquestionably have a mystical significance. In view of the above, it appears probable that they depict the progress of the foolish, or the enlightened, towards Heaven, or Hell, as conceived originally by the Buddhists.

^(a)Journal of the R.A.S., Oct., 1881.

^(b)Compare with the Mahommedan Hells. See p. 45.

- (4). The Raurāva Hell: for murderers.
- (5). The Maharaurava Hell: for heretics.
- (6). The Tapana Hell: for those who kill and roast animals.
- (7). Pratapana: for apostates.
- (8). Avichi: for those who revile Buddha or slay Holy men.

This is the lowest Hell, and in it there is no intermission of torment until the sufferer has been cleansed.

These hells are in the nature of purgatory, for though they exist always, the same souls do not remain there for ever. Avichi, like the City of Dis, is surrounded by a wall of iron, but it is seven-fold. At death the wicked are carried before Yemma, who is the stern but just Judge, and King of the Underworld. He dooms them to that Hell which their crimes necessitate, there to remain in torment until they have been cleansed by suffering. The hells vary, for while some are hot as fire, others are frozen and bitterly cold. In the *Kin-hong-king-in-kwo-tsiang-chu* there are pictures showing these Hells, and the type of punishment inflicted is not unlike that shown on the fresco at Chaldon, or those mentioned in the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*.

The first scene depicts the Hall of Judgment with the Judge seated on his judgment throne. The servants of Yemma are shown dragging away their victims, who in this case appear to have been guilty of the crime of slaying animals. It should be noted that the Chinese name for these Hells is, *Earth Prisons*, clearly showing that they are the old Underworld, which has been converted into a place of torment, exactly as occurred in Mediæval Europe.

When we turn to the Chinese Buddhist conception of Heaven it becomes necessary to understand in outline their cosmogony, which is very similar to that held by other races before the belief that the world was shaped like a saucer¹ gave way to our modern knowledge that it is a globe. According to Chinese beliefs, the earth is divided into four large islands, or continents, which are placed at the four cardinal points, and are surrounded by the ocean, which in turn is ringed round by seven circles of rocks, the furthest being called in Chinese, *Chiti Shan*, meaning, *The Earth-holding mountains*.² In the centre of the ocean, between the continents, stands Sumeru,³ the abode of the Gods. The Rev. S. Beal suggests the name of Sumeru is connected with the root Suma, meaning, "Heavenly Water," and his suggestion is valuable in view of the Norse conception of the Fountain of Urd, guarded by the Norns, and the similar idea in the Triad ritual, where we find a reference to the "waters which reach up to the Heavens." On the lower slopes of this mountain dwell the lesser gods, and on its summit the Greater Gods, who, according to the Chinese

¹In England there still exist a few people who continue to adhere to this belief, and they even have a society to propagate their views. No arguments will alter their beliefs.

²Compare with the Norse conception of a rim of Mountains on the outer edge, one big island in the centre, with the Mountain of the Gods in the midst.

³Compare also with the Hindu "Holy Mount Meru."

Buddhists are 88¹ in number, and represent the year, the four seasons, and the 28 days of the lunar month. Of these, Sakra was considered King. The Indian Buddhists, no doubt, inherited these "Gods" from the old Aryan beliefs current in their country, but they gradually transmuted both them and their heavens into more spiritual conceptions.

The mountain became sub-divided into 18 concentric circles, or heavens,² but life there was not permanent; Souls could die in one plane and be re-born in another, higher or lower as they deserved. The only Permanent Peace was in Nirvana, which was a purely spiritual conception, above the highest Heaven of Sumeru, but not localised in any particular spot. The 18 heavens are divided into three main divisions; the first consisting of four heavens—the world of desire; the second consisting of five more,—where desire has passed away but form exists; the third consisting of four more, one above the other, till the summit of Sumeru is reached, in all four of which there is neither form nor desire. Beyond all lay Nirvana. Buddha never denied the existence of the Gods, but he taught that they were neither perfect nor absolutely supreme, rather they were the agents of the Law and the means whereby it was carried into effect. "The perfect man is above the Gods," he said, on more than one occasion, by which he meant that man should rise higher than even Sakra, and enter direct into Nirvana.

THE CITY OF WILLOWS, A BUDDHIST HEAVEN.

It is not necessary for us to go too deeply into the higher conceptions of the Buddhists, for the Triad Ritual reflects popular beliefs. All we need say is that the City of Willows is one of the Heavens of Form, and that it is probably one of those of Desire, although it is difficult to identify the precise Heaven intended. Clearly it is not the highest Heaven, where the High Gods dwell, for they are Formless, and so are their surroundings. The City of Willows, on the contrary, has very materialistic forms, e.g., houses, shops and rice fields, besides other indications which cause us to localise it as one of the four lower Heavens of Desire. Indeed, we shall probably not be far wrong if we consider it to be the first, or lowest, of all the Heavens, yet it is Heaven nevertheless, and therefore a stage further on the spiritual journey than is the Earthly

¹ Compare with the 88 years of our Lord's life, the 88 degrees of the A. & A. Rite, etc.

² Probably from the Zodiac, with the sun at the centre. Each circle would thus represent the signs of the Zodiac and be supposed in some way to reflect its characteristics. Thus the grosser side of the Zodiac would correspond with the lower Heavens, and so on. Gradually this idea would become more spiritualised and the 18 Heavens would represent stages of spiritual evolution, while Nirvana, the only really permanent place, would be envisaged as being beyond the highest Heaven of Sumeru. Thus with the earth as the first, and lowest, plane, plus 18 heavenly planes, and finally Nirvana, beyond, we reach the number 15, which is that of the fifteen planes of spiritual beings envisaged in the Higher Mysticism of the Hindus. Among them earth life is one, plus 14 spiritual planes of being in an ascending scale, the highest and last being union with Paramatma—the All-Pervading. Masons will be interested to note that Jacob's ladder in the E.A. tracing board has fifteen rungs.



KWAN II

Paradise through which the Hung Heroes have passed. This being admitted, we see that the Earthly Paradise is linked with Heaven by the bridge of two planks, and it is noteworthy that the candidates may not cross by the bridge. Why? The three Holy Buddhas are on it, we are told, and this suggests that it links with the summit of the Holy Mountain, and not with its base. That is to say, with the highest heaven, or possibly with what lies above, namely, Nirvana,¹ which may account for the fact that the candidates could not cross by it: they were not considered to be sufficiently evolved to pass beyond time and form.

A popular Buddhist picture, which bears directly on our subject, depicts "The Valley of the Shadow." A pilgrim pursued by fearsome monsters is shown as having reached the edge of a precipice. In front of him lie two huge lakes, and between them runs a narrow strip of rock. One lake is filled with fire, among whose flames we see countless devils, while the other is full of water, in which lurk monsters of the deep. Darkness enshrouds the view, but on the other side of the narrow causeway stands Amitabha (Amida) who has achieved salvation, and from him issues a ray of light which illuminates the path of Dread. The legend on the picture is "Trust Me, for I will save you."^(a) Herein we have a clear parallel to the miraculous causeway which, according to the Traditional History, enabled the Five Founders to escape, not only from the burning monastery filled with soldiers, but also across the sea. It calls to mind the bridge in the Hung ritual, and also the causeway through Hell trodden by Yudishthira, but it is clearly not the bridge which links Paradise and Heaven.

We have thus seen that the Chinese Buddhist religious beliefs explain the main features of the framework of the Triad ritual, but there are other sources from which certain details seem to be derived, and these we will consider in the next chapter. Before doing so let us briefly summarise the chief essentials.

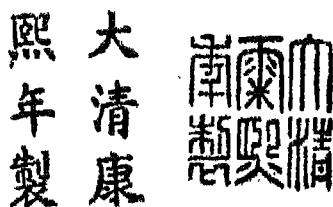
The Chinese Buddhists believed that the world was shaped like a saucer with the Mountain of the Gods in the centre, on which was Heaven, while beneath the earth were the earth prisons, or Hells. Their Paradise is described as being in the West, not in the East, which would be explicable if it were derived from an actual island, namely, Socotra. In the main, therefore, their beliefs were identical with those of most other nations, and even this particular and apparent difference is easily understandable. They may have overlooked the fact that when one reaches the edge of the world one must return underneath it. In this Earthly Paradise dwelt Amitabha and his daughter Kwan Yin. She it was who descended into the Underworld to rescue the Souls who were in

¹Just as the bridge of Byfrost, although it touched Asgard, mounted over the top of it. On the top of Byfrost sat the three Norns, who controlled even the Gods themselves. May they not in a dim way represent the triune nature of the All-Embracing? If so the three Buddhas exactly correspond.

(a) A. Lloyd, *The Creed of Half Japan*. pp. 213-214, Note 1.

bondage, and hence it is natural that she should accompany the Hung Heroes on their journey. Furthermore, this voyage to her Earthly Paradise was actually envisaged as taking place in a ship, and from this we see whence the Hung Ship originated.

The only important details we have not yet definitely identified are the Hung Gate and the Gate of the Hall of Loyalty, for the Gate of the City of Willows is clearly that into one of the lower heavens, or tiers, of Mount Sumeru. It is, of course, possible that they represent the confines of two lower heavens, and that the City of Willows is on the third tier of the Mountain, but I think, despite their apparent proximity to Heaven, this view would be wrong, and that they belong to the Underworld. It looks as if in course of time they have become wrongly placed, and that they should stand in some position on the journey before the point where the Heroes reached the Isle of the Blest, and not after it, for this reason. The Hall of Fidelity and Loyalty corresponds to the Hall of Judgment of Osiris in Egypt, and to the Judgment Hall in the Chinese Underworld. If this view is correct, the Hung Gate marks the entrance into the Underworld, and the Gate of the Hall of Fidelity and Loyalty, together with the Weighing in the Scales, indicate the judgment before Yemma in the Underworld. The Fiery Furnace and the Red Youth represent respectively the doom of Yemma, and his attendant, waiting to carry away the condemned to the Fiery Furnace, or the Pit of Hell.



REGNAL TITLE AND SEAL OF
KANG HSI. 1662-1722.

CHAPTER III.

CONFUCIANISM AND TAOISM.

(Their contributions to the Triad Ritual).



ET us now consider what contributions to the ritual have been made by Confucianism and Taoism. In the very earliest records of China we find references to a Supreme Being, under the designation of Tien, or Tien Ti, and also to Shang-ti. It is extremely difficult to ascertain the exact difference between these two titles, but it seems as if Tien represented "Heaven," a Spiritual Essence of an impersonal nature, not unlike the Hindu Paramatma, or perhaps even more akin to the Great Manitou of the Red Indians, whereas Shang Ti is certainly more personal, and in the earliest historic records seems to resemble the Jewish Jehovah.

Shang-ti was essentially a stern, but just, God, who punished the Emperor and his subjects in this life by plagues and misfortunes if they acted evilly, and on the other hand gave peace and prosperity if they conformed to His Laws. Thus we read in the *Shoo King*, or *Book of History*, that when Tang raised an insurrection against the tyrant Chieh Kuei,¹ he said:—"It is not I, the little child, who dares to undertake what may seem to be a rebellious enterprise, but for the many crimes of the Sovereign of Hsia, Heaven has commanded me to destroy him." Again, when the last of the Shang dynasty had degenerated so far from the high standard set up by its founder Tang that he became as bad a tyrant as Chieh Keui, another champion of the oppressed people arose, in the person of Wu Wang, who issued a proclamation in which he said:—"He (the tyrant) abides squatting on his heels, not serving Shang-ti or the Spirits of Heaven and Earth."² Moreover, Wu Wang's Uncle, the Duke of Chou, said:—"I have heard the saying 'Shang-ti leads men to tranquil security'." The Duke of Chou is of importance for another reason. His name is associated with the first recorded reference to ancestral worship in China, for he prayed to the father, grandfather, and great-grandfather of Wu Wang, who was dangerously ill, asking that Wu's life might be spared.

In course of years the tendency grew up to regard the Emperor, who called himself the "Son of Heaven," as the sole intermediary for the prayers of the people, and so in practice it became impossible for the common people to pray to Tien direct, and this, no doubt, in part explains the evolution of the Spirits of

¹The supposed date of this event was B.C. 1765.

²About B.C. 1184.

Heaven and Earth into Gods, whose numbers tended to be re-inforced by the conferring of Divine honours on actual men, such as Kwan-ti. Shang-ti, however, survived in an active form, and became chief God of the later Taoists, under the title of "Yuh-hwang Shang-ti," meaning the "Precious Imperial God."

The men who had the most profound influence on Chinese religious beliefs were Confucius and Lao-tsze. The former was the founder of Confucianism, and the latter of Taoism, and they lived at the same date, that is, during the 6th century B.C.. The two men were different in almost every characteristic, and the systems founded by them have developed along very different paths. The period was a most disheartening one for honest and patriotic men, for it was an epoch of steadily increasing anarchy. The great Chou Dynasty, founded in 1169 B.C., for a time ruled gloriously, but the seeds of its disruption were planted very early in its career by the establishment of great hereditary fiefs, and their division among scions of the Royal House, or representatives of former dynasties. This led in time to the collapse of the central power.

One of the earliest Chou Emperors is of peculiar interest to us, however, because of his legendary journey to the Western Paradise. Mu Wang, who ascended the throne in B.C. 1001, is supposed to have travelled to the Palace of Hsi Wang Mu—the *Royal Mother of the West*—who dwelt in a kind of Earthly Paradise on the Kun Lun Mountains. An interesting sculpture of the Han period, of about 145 A.D., shows his reception, and is illustrated opposite page 28.^(a) This we shall describe more fully later. As years went by the power of the Chou Emperors waned, until by B.C. 600 they were little better than shadows, and the great feudal princes defied them and fought amongst themselves for supremacy. It was during this epoch that Confucius and Lao-tsze respectively were born, the former in 551 B.C., and the latter about 604 B.C..¹

CONFUCIUS.

Confucius is said to have been born in a cave on Mount Ni,² to which his mother had gone to be confined in obedience to a dream. When he grew up he became a learned student and devoted his life to studying the past history of China, and particularly questions connected with ceremonial. During his life-time he held several important official positions. He evolved a system of philosophy based on "Good conduct"; although he never actually denied the existence of a Supreme Being or of survival after death, he practically ignored both, and concentrated on the necessity for "Right Conduct" for its own sake.

¹As Buddha was born B.C. 620 and died B.C. 540, we see that Buddha, Lao-tsze and Confucius, the three men who have most profoundly influenced Chinese thought, were contemporaries.

²Mithra was also said to have been born in a cave. No doubt in the case of Confucius we have an old allegorical legend grafted on to a historical character.

(a) Reproduced by kind permission of the Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, from *Chinese Art*, by S. W. Bushell.

He was, however, a great lover of ancient ceremonial, and his creed has developed into a philosophy of life and a system of Ancestor Worship, because the ancestors represent the past history of the family and of the nation. His religion, if such it can be called, is of a somewhat cold and intellectual kind which, though it appeals to the educated classes, and during the reign of the Manchus was the official religion of China, largely fails to arouse the enthusiasm of the masses, amongst whom it has little influence. It has been described as very materialistic, but this is unjust and misleading. It would be more correct to say that it is essentially practical, and to its credit it should be noted that both Confucius and his followers have always set their faces against charms, spells and superstitions, such as disfigure the Buddhist and Taoist religions in China. In brief, the teaching of Confucius at its highest is summed up in the phrase, "do your duty in whatever position of life you be, and in particular to your family and the State." This is a high ideal undoubtedly, but as set out by Confucius it becomes more a politico-moral system than a religion which satisfies the spiritual needs of the average man.

Perhaps it is to the labours of Mencius that we owe the present organisation of Confucianism, and to-day Confucius is venerated almost as if he were divine. Temples have been built to his honour throughout the length and breadth of the Empire, the most famous of which is that near his tomb, at Shantung, where his spirit is supposed to rest. The ceremonies performed at all these temples are to his spirit, and are of the same nature as those offered to spirits of other, though perhaps less exalted, "Ancestors." Emphatically, he is not worshipped as a God.

The influence of Confucius in the Triad ritual, however, appears to be slight, and so far as it goes does but re-enforce the importance of patriotism, loyalty and filial piety, which are the very foundations of life in China. To some extent the honour paid to the ancestral spirits may also be due to his influence, but here again, he only strengthened views already held in China, and which are endorsed likewise by Buddhists and Taoists. It is certainly significant that no direct reference to his teaching appears in the ceremony, the only mention of his name being a casual one in connection with the Prayer of Consecration of the Pen and Paper. The reason, indeed, is obvious. The Triad ritual teaches of reward for loyalty after death, and of this Confucius knew nothing. If he did not deny its possibility, he certainly did not inculcate it. His teaching was that a man must do his duty without any expectation of personal reward here, or hereafter, in the belief that by his influence he would promote the general well-being of the whole community; hence, no ritual of the journey of the soul after death could originate from his writings. In addition, the Confucian party were unquestionably bitterly hostile to the Hung Society, and this fact not only explains why his influence has been reduced to a minimum, but also justifies our devoting some space to considering his teaching, for it was this teaching, as interpreted by the officials who gathered round the Manchu

Emperors, which caused the Imperial authorities to adopt an attitude of bitter hostility towards the Hung Society, and this in turn caused them to be anti-Dynastic.

Thus it is only in the moral precepts that we can expect to find traces of Confucianism, and though in a sense they are there, as a rule it is not because they have been incorporated deliberately, but because they are universally accepted as sound by the Chinese, no matter whether they are Confucians, Taoists or Buddhists. Otherwise the teaching of the ritual is clean contrary to that of Confucius, and, as already indicated, the Confucian party stirred up the Emperor to persecute not only Buddhists and Taoists, but the Hung Society itself, because they considered that "it taught falsehoods concerning future rewards and punishments, and dealt in magical swords, mirrors and the like."

TAOISM.

As previously stated, the early records show that the Chinese recognised a Supreme Being, under the name of *Tien Ti*, and they also called Him, *Shang-ti*. At first Tien was represented by a character which is clearly a crude drawing of a human being, and this would indicate an anthropomorphic conception of God, but as centuries passed the Chinese conception of Tien grew more spiritual and perhaps more nebulous, while it was Shang-ti who retained the human attributes. The two names are still used somewhat indiscriminately, and up to the time of Lao-tsze we cannot draw any clear distinctions between them. Confucius left the name Tien as a vague and nebulous conception, but one which, for all that, denoted a just, overshadowing power.

Lao-tsze, born about 604 B.C., evolved a definite conception of the Supreme Being, not unlike the Hindu Paramatma, and this in time merged with the Buddhist conception of the Adi-Buddha, which conception seems to have survived to some extent in the Triad Ritual. Unfortunately we have few details concerning the life of this profound thinker, and indeed some critics doubt whether he ever actually existed. According to the historian Szema Tseen^(a) Lao-tsze was born at a village named Keu-jin, which means *Oppressed Benevolence*, in the Parish of Li, meaning *Cruelty*, in the district of Koo, equallying *Bitterness*, in the state of Tsoo, meaning, *Suffering*. The very appropriateness of these names as the place of birth of a great teacher naturally arouses our suspicions, and without going so far as to consider that he never existed, it is permissible to suggest that the names of his birth place, etc., have been invented later, and have a purely allegorical meaning.¹ One thing is clear, someone must have been the chief founder of Taoism, and until

¹ Ancient Koo is identified by some as the modern Kwel-ti Foo, in the Province of Honan, and at Koo-yang a house in which Lao-tsze is supposed to have lived is shown, near which there is a Temple dedicated to his memory.

(a) See Prof. R. K. Douglas in *Confucianism and Taoism*, to which I am indebted for much useful information in this section.

evidence in favour of another person is produced, the most natural assumption is that at that period a great sage, Lao-tsze, did exist, although subsequently numerous marvels concerning him were invented by his followers.

Lao-tsze, later in life, held the office of "Keeper of the Archives" at the Court of Chou, and here Confucius had an interview with the older man, from which he retired somewhat discomfited. Lao-tsze had little patience with the formalities and ceremonial which interested Confucius, and he saw more clearly than did the latter the impending collapse of the Chou Dynasty, nor had he any sympathy with the attempts of Confucius to buttress it up. Soon after Lao-tsze retired from the cares of State, and spent the remainder of his life meditating upon the nature of the Supreme Being, whom he called Tao, and on virtue. As the anarchy increased his place of retirement became insecure, so he set out on a journey into a far country, and on his way passed through the Hankoo Pass, in the Province of Honan. Here he paused for a time to teach the *Keeper of the Pass* his doctrines concerning Tao, and then continued his journey *Westward*, from whence he never returned. He is said to have left a son, Tsung, who became a general and received a fief at Twan-kau. From him five generations in direct descent are traced, the last of whom settled in the State of Tse, and after him we can find no records of the descendants of Lao-tsze.^(a)

I venture to suggest that with the probable exception of the fact that he held the office of librarian to the Chou Dynasty, the whole of this story, meagre as it may be, is an allegory. The journey to the *West* and the teaching of the *Keeper of the Pass* are reminiscent of other journeys to the West. If, in addition, we consider the obviously legendary accretions which have gathered around him, we shall unquestionably agree that his "life" must be regarded as the allegory of the descent of the Divine Spark into matter, and its return whence it came. According to some of the Taoist writers, Lao-tsze was a spiritual being, an embodiment of Tao, and his appearance in the Chou Dynasty was only one of his many incarnations, this one being the tenth.¹ He was conceived by his Mother because she saw a falling star,² and lay for 81 years in her womb. When he was born under a plum tree he was a grey-haired old man, hence his name, Lao-tsze, which means, "Old Boy." With his first breath he was endowed with all wisdom, and, pointing to the plum tree, said "Le (plum)³ shall be my surname." He then rose in the air, pointed his

¹Compare with the nine avatars of Vishnu which have been, and the tenth, Kalki, which is still to come. One cannot help suggesting that Hindu teaching has had its influence on the whole of Taoism.

²It is a common belief that the shooting stars are spirits. See, for example, the Egyptian story of the Isle of the Double, in Maspero's *Popular Tales of Ancient Egypt*.

³The fact that in the Triad ritual the five Ancestors are admiring the *plum* and the peach trees may refer to Lao-tsze's surname.

(a)Prof. R. K. Douglas, *Confucianism and Taoism*

left hand to Heaven and his right hand to earth,¹ and said, "In Heaven above and on earth beneath Tao alone is worthy of Honour."^(a) He is said to have had ten toes on each foot and ten lines on each hand.²

The Keeper of the Han-koo Pass, Yin Hi by name, begged Lao-tsze to teach him about Tao, which the Sage did, and before he departed left with him a work in 5,000 characters on the subject of *The Way (Tao) and Virtue (Tih)*. This work has become the basis of thousands of commentaries, which have almost obscured it, and it is from them, rather than from the original teaching of the Sage, that modern Taoism, with its mass of superstitions and charms, has been evolved. The full title of the book is *Tao-tih-King*. Professor Douglas explains Tao as meaning *The Way*, and adds, "To express the meaning of Tao we should describe it as,

1. The Absolute, the totality of beings and of things.
2. The phenomenal world and its order.
3. The ethical nature of the good man and the principle of his actions."^(b)

Furthermore, Lao-tsze taught the doctrines of universal loving-kindness and humility; he says, "I have three precious things which I hold fast and prize; namely, compassion, economy and humility." What was the end of his Quest? It is given in this passage from Chapter 28:—"He who knows the glory and at the same time keeps to shame³ will be the whole world's valley. Being the whole world's valley, eternal virtue will fill him, and he will return home to Tao."^(c) Lao-tsze, indeed, in many ways teaches what Christianity propounded, namely, recompense evil with good.^(d) As to the nature of Tao, he says,^(e) "Tao is Unconditioned Being which . . . is the origin of heaven and earth, including God Himself, and when capable of being expressed by name is the Mother of all things."⁴

In brief, the return of the individual to Tao is the return of the Finite to the Infinite, and the peace of Union, or At-one-ment with the All-embracing. We thus see that despite its Eastern garb Taoism is a form of pure mysticism.

¹We thus obtain a Taoist, as well as a Buddhist, origin for this Triad sign, but it is far older than both, being used also by Vishnu in India, with whom it is still associated, and from whom it was taken over by early Buddhism. In the West, Christ is often depicted, in stained glass windows of the mediæval period, making this sign as *He ascends to Heaven*.

²Clearly allegorical, and should be compared with the ten avatars of Lao-tsze and the ten days' journey in the Hung Boat.

³For shame we should use the term *humility*, and so the phrase becomes not unlike the "Valley of Humiliation" in Bunyan, through which the true seeker on the Mystic Path passes on his way to Union with the Divine.

⁴Compare with the Hindu Paramatma.

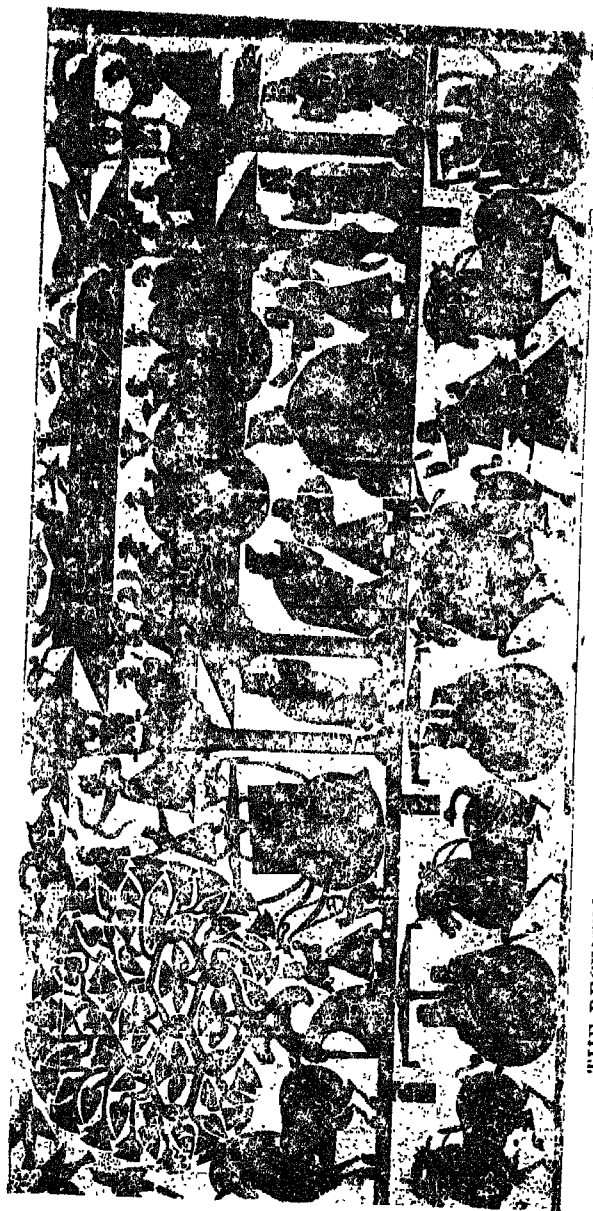
^(a)Prof. R. K. Douglas, *Confucianism and Taoism*.

^(b)*Ibid.* p. 190.

^(c)*Ibid.* p. 195.

^(d)*Ibid.* LXIII

^(e)*Ibid.* I.



THE RECEPTION OF MU WANG IN THE TAOIST WESTERN PARADISE.

Hence the return of the soul to the Supreme Being as hinted at in the Triad ritual may not unreasonably be ascribed to the influence of the highest form of Taoism, kept alive, although but dimly, in the hidden sanctuary of this great initiatory rite, just as the same idea lies hidden in Western Freemasonry. If the bulk of the Hung¹ Heroes have no conception of the fact, that is not unusual in such societies, but it may be that there, as in the West, there are a few who appreciate the true meaning of the Mystic Rites. To such men the City of Willows would be not a sensual Heaven; but an allegory of the final Union with the Divine Source of All.

A careful study of the ritual reveals constant references to "Heaven" which is evidently a principle of a more definite and active nature than the Buddhist conception of Adi-Buddha, who is nowhere mentioned by name, and though even here, no doubt, there has been a blending of ideas, we are entitled to consider that this reiteration of the importance of "Heaven" is due to the survival of some of the earlier teaching of Taoism. It should be noted that by *Tien*, *Heaven*, is meant *The Supreme Being*, *The Divine Impalpable Essence*, and not the dwelling place of the Gods. Thus when the Five Ancestors cried, "It is the will of Heaven," they meant much more than "It is the law of Karma." They implied that the Supreme Being had weighed the Dynasty of Ts'ing in the balance and had found it wanting, signifying that decision by a definite sign, in the shape of the Magic Censer. While it would be a mistake to regard "Heaven" as a personal God, in the sense that Jehovah was, it is clear that It is a definite active principle, taking a marked interest in the welfare of men, and as such must be distinguished from the somewhat nebulous conceptions held by the Buddhists of the Southern school.

This, then, represents the most noble contribution of Taoism to the Triad ritual, derived from the teaching of its founder, but there is another side to the picture. The exalted mysticism of Lao-tsze was far above the heads of his followers, and within two generations of his death his original conceptions had become overlaid with a mass of superstitions and beliefs which are entirely at variance with what he originally taught. It may be said that therein his fate has been that of nearly every religious teacher, and it is not so much what he himself taught as what his followers to-day believe which interests us in this study.

To a large extent his speculations were alien to the minds of the essentially practical Chinese, who are far less mystical than the Hindus, and, though they paid outward reverence to them, they at once began to amplify and alter his teachings in order to bring them into harmony with their own views of life. Two tendencies are noticeable, one being to emphasise the necessity of conformity to sound moral principles, based largely on Confucian teaching, and the other, to incorporate and develop legends, old primitive beliefs, and current superstitions. With regard to the former tendency, there is much to justify it, for practical men of the world, such as the Chinese are, find it difficult to

live up to such an exalted ideal as, "Recompense evil with good," whereas they can try to be examples of filial piety and not to oppress the weak. The other tendency is thoroughly bad, since far from allegorising the old legends and deducing valuable spiritual lessons therefrom, as they might have done, in the majority of cases they taught them as actual facts, and encouraged the grossest forms of superstition.

LIEH-TSZE AND THE WESTERN PARADISE.

The most important writer in the Taoist cause who followed Lao-tsze was Lieh-tsze, to whom, more than to anyone else, may be ascribed the rapid growth of superstitious beliefs. He lived in the 5th century B.C., and converted obvious allegories into statements of non-existent facts. Even worse was the definite encouragement which he gave to the development of magical processes. In all sincerity he related as an actual fact the legendary story of the visit of the Emperor Mu Wang (B.C. 1001) to Hsi Wang Mu, the Royal Mother of the West, thus lending his sanction to this allegory, not as an allegory, but as an historical incident, and therefore as an example to be followed physically by others. This lesson was promptly assimilated by several Emperors, as we shall see later, who solemnly set forth to find this Earthly Paradise. In like manner he, in all seriousness, related stories of great sages who by knowledge of magic were able to reverse the seasons and make animals fly.

Chang-tsze, who lived about the same period at Lieh-tsze, is a man of a better type, although Lieh-tsze himself at times shows real insight, despite his superstitious and credulous beliefs. Chang-tsze, however, followed Lao-tsze much more closely, and his great work, *Nan-hwa-king*, on the vanity of human effort, rightly holds a high position in the esteem of educated Chinese. But the philosophical speculations of such men had little attraction for the average Chinese, who quickly substituted for Lao-tsze's object (the return to inaction in the bosom of the All-Pervading) the attainment of Physical Immortality. This conception must be clearly distinguished from Spiritual Immortality, which may justly be adduced from the teaching of the Sage. By the 3rd century B.C., the belief that charms existed which would confer physical immortality was firmly established among the Taoists.

After a period of almost complete anarchy King Chêng succeeded in overthrowing the last of the Chou Dynasty and in uniting the whole Empire under his rule. He took the name of Shih Huang Ti, and tried to establish a claim to be the first Emperor of China by burning all books which gave an account of preceding rulers, but he made an exception in favour of Taoist writings, for he was a warm supporter of that faith. As time wore on he passed more and more under Taoist influence, and although at first he was sceptical of some of the miracles they claimed to work, in time he accepted even their wildest stories

and acted upon them in the belief that they were really true. To this credulous Emperor the Taoists related marvellous stories of the Earthly Paradise, which lay in the West. There dwelt Hsi Wang Mu, the Royal Mother of the West, and in particular they reiterated the story of the supposed journey of the ancient Emperor Mu Wang to her court, about B.C., 1001. As this legend was firmly believed among the Taoists, and as there still exists a Han monument which depicts the scene, we will describe it here, since this belief has undoubtedly affected, if it did not originate, the more spiritual Western Paradise of Kwan Yin, which in the Hung ritual is represented by the Isle of the Blest.

An illustration of the reception of Mu Wang is reproduced opposite p. 28.^(a) The original bas-relief measures four by two feet and was found in the ancient cemetery of the Wu family, situated about ten miles South of the City of Chia-hsiang-hsien, in the Province of Shangtung, and is of about 145 A.D.. The reproduction is from a rubbing, now in the possession of the Victoria and Albert Museum. There are two scenes on the slab, the upper one being that which interests us, as it gives the reception of Mu Wang by Hsi Wang Mu herself, "in a two-storied Pavilion with two straight, untilted tiled roofs, flanked by twin columns¹ which are also double roofed; the lower roof in each case is supported by plain, round pillars, the upper roof by caryatides. A pair of gigantic phoenixes are disporting on the top of the roof, fed by winged sprites; the head of a dragon projects on the right, . . . Mu Wang, large in scale, as befits his dignity, is seated below, under a canopy, attended by a servitor with fan and towel, while another comes up with a tray of food;² . . . Hsi Wang Mu, wearing a coroneted hat, is installed with her court in the upper story, attended by ladies carrying *cup, mirror, and fan*,³ besides another on the left with her special attributes, the triple jewelled fruit of long life,⁴ with which she endows her faithful votaries. In the courtyard stands a stately *ho huan* tree, with forked trunk and interlaced branches, the sacred cosmic tree⁵ of Taoist lore. . . ."^(b)

¹Compare the two pillars which flanked King Solomon's Temple, and also the Temple of Astarte at Paphos. See J. S. M. Ward, *Who was Hiram Abiff?* p. 36.

²Compare with similar offerings of food given to visitors to Paradise. See the stories of Yoone-cara, p. 48, Gilgamesh, p. 98, etc.

³Perhaps here we have the origin of the fan, and especially of the mirror, in the Triad ritual. Certainly the Taoists laid great stress on magic mirrors. For example, Ko Hung, a Taoist writer of the 4th century A.D., says, "Sometimes a mirror is needed, for living things when they grow old can all, by means of their pure parts, assume human form. In such cases their true forms can be infallibly detected by means of a mirror, . . . a glance in the mirror at the reflected image of the monster will reveal its true form." (See Prof. R. K. Douglas, *Taoism*, p. 245). Here we see precisely the same idea as appertains to the Precious Mirror of the Triad Society, and the fact that the author quoted was called, Ko Hung may also be significant, although the scarcity of different names in China in proportion to its population prevents us from attaching the same importance to the coincidence that we might elsewhere.

⁴In the Triad ritual the fruit of Long Life is represented by the Peach, but the idea probably evolved from this symbol of Hsi Wang Mu.

⁵Compare with other cosmic trees, e.g. that of the Norse, and also with the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden.

(a)Reproduced by courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum, from *Chinese Art*, by S. W. Bushell.

(b)*Ibid.* pp. 20 and 21.

Although this sculpture is of a later date than Shih Huang Ti, it no doubt depicts fairly accurately the description of this wonderful land given to the Emperor, who was so fired by the account of Mu Wang's success that he fitted out a naval expedition to find the Western Paradise, and placed in charge of it a Taoist magician, named Sen She^(a), who failed to reach it, but reported that he had come within sight of the Islands of Paradise and had been driven back by contrary winds. The Emperor promptly despatched a second expedition, particularly instructing its members to bring back some of the "Waters of Life," but it also was unsuccessful. Although the Emperor had failed in his quest, a number of Taoist magicians arose who vowed that they had been to the Earthly Paradise and returned, relating most wonderful stories of what they had seen. They declared that they were on the friendliest terms with the inhabitants of the Isles of the Blest, who had bestowed on them the gift of immortality. In order to keep up the deception of the ignorant and credulous, when such imposters actually died their disciples announced that they had returned to this Paradise, declaring that they intended to remain there for ever.

The Emperor Wu Ti, of the Han Dynasty, who reigned about 100 B.C., was another Imperial believer in the Isles of the Blest, and despatched an expedition to find them, which not unnaturally failed. He, himself, visited the Eastern Pung Mountains,^(b) and was shown the footprint of an enormous genii.¹ Even he queried its genuineness, but in the end allowed himself to be convinced. Wu Ti was a great believer in such spirits, however, and he dedicated Mount Tai to their worship, and raised a sacred mound at the foot of the mountain.² We are told that during the night which followed the ceremony a bright supernatural light rested on the mound.³

When Wu Ti died, in B.C.87, the Taoists lost one of their most powerful supporters and soon began to feel the competition of Buddhism, which at the same time began to influence their legends and even their teaching. Nevertheless, during the first and second centuries A.D. Taoism remained in favour, and it was during this period that the custom arose of offering Imperial sacrifices in the Temple dedicated to the memory of Lao-tsze, a proceeding which would have made that worthy sage turn in his grave had he known it. After the third century A.D., Taoism steadily declined in favour, and in the sixth century, in the company of Buddhism, suffered a definite period of persecution, for all doctrines, save those of Confucius, were forbidden. But the cloud passed, and at times Taoism even basked in the Imperial favour for a short while. It is

¹Compare this legend with the Tale of the Buddha's footprint at Adam's Peak, in Ceylon, and also with Lucian's story of the Footprint of Hercules, related in the *Vera Historia*.

²Perhaps the mound built over the slain leader Wan, as related in the Traditional History, was based on this custom.

³Compare with the red light which appeared from the Censer in the Traditional History.

(a)Prof. R. K. Douglas, *Confucianism and Taoism*. p. 286.

(b) Ibid.

not necessary, however, for us to follow its fate in detail, except to remind our readers that, like Buddhism, it was severely persecuted by Kang Hsi, and thereafter officially prescribed by all the Manchus, which explains why Taoists, as well as Buddhists, in the Triad Society should hate the Manchus.

THE GODS OF THE TAOISTS.

There yet remain certain aspects of later Taoism which require our consideration. Lao-tsze may not actively have spoken against the somewhat shadowy spirits of nature whose existence was postulated by the common people, but he paid them scant reverence. The modern Taoists, however, have developed them into a definite hierarchy of gods, supplementing their number by the deification of various human beings of outstanding merit. Shang-ti, the old conception of a personal god, of which we find traces in the early Chinese records, has been developed, and in the process He has been degraded into a King of the Gods, not unlike the Roman Jupiter in general character. Shang-ti to-day, under the title of Yuh-Wang Shang-ti, the Precious Imperial God, is the head of the Taoist hierarchy, although behind him still exists the shadowy form of the All-Embracing, called Tien, meaning, Heaven. The lesser gods, among whom are Tung Wang Kung, "The Royal King of the East," and his consort, Hsi Wang Mu, "The Royal Mother of the West," also receive considerable veneration. In addition we have Kwan Ti, the god of war, and even Lao-tsze has been exalted and is worshipped as a Trinity, not unlike the three Buddhas, or the Hindu Trinity, under the title of San Tsing, or the "Three Pure Ones," and these three images are usually the first objects which meet the eye in a Taoist Temple.

In the Triad ritual we find only one clear reference to him, due no doubt to the predominance of Buddha, but we have definite references to Kwan Ti, to various genii, to the Eight Taoist Immortals, and to a Taoist goddess who follows them, and who may be Hsi Wang Mu, the Royal Mother of the West. Furthermore, in the Bridge which links the Isle of the West with the City of Willows we may have a reference to the annual journey of Hsi Wang Mu to her consort, Tung Wang Kung, concerning which a Taoist of the second century B.C., Tung-fang So, wrote as follows^(a):—

"On the summit of the Kun-lun mountains¹ there is a gigantic bird named Hsi-yu, which faces the South; it stretches out its left wing to support the venerable King of the East and its right wing supports the maternal Queen of the West: on its back is a spot without feathers, nineteen thousand Li across. Hsi Wang Mu, once a year, rides along the wing to make a visit to Tung Wang Kung."

The bald spot on the back of the bird clearly acts as a kind of bridge, which

¹Clearly the mountain of the gods in the centre of the world, on whose top the mythological bird stands.

(a) S. W. Bushell, *Chinese Art*. Vol. I., p. 82.

links together the Western Paradise with the Eastern Heaven. If we compare this "bird" with the Norse rainbow bridge, Byfrost, which arched over the Mountain of Asgard and touched earth on the East and West, we shall perceive that the similarity is very striking. The Earthly Paradise in this case is behind the Mountains of Sunset, and the Heaven of Tung Wang Kung is behind the Mountains of Dawn, the cusp of the arch, represented by the back of the bird, is just where the Norns stand on Byfrost, and it is surely significant that in the Triad ritual, their place is taken by the three Buddhas. It is possible, therefore, that the bridge is Taoist; were it Buddhist, we should expect it to lead from an Earthly Paradise on the confines of the Underworld to the Mountain in the centre, but the genuine Taoist teaching does not admit of Hell at all, and though, in deference to Buddhist beliefs, a faint suggestion of it is given by the presence of the fiery furnace, the Hung Heroes do not pass through it. Like the Taoist sages, they start off towards the West in a boat, reach the Western Paradise of Hsi Wang Mu, and then pass by a bridge to the City of Willows, representing the Eastern Heaven of Tung Wang Kung, even as does the Goddess herself. These details are significant, but even if this bridge were originally Taoist the fact that on it stand the three Buddhas shows that it has been accepted by the Buddhists, and incorporated with their teaching.

Among other important Divine beings who have been more or less appropriated by the Taoists is the Spirit who presides over the Great Bear, whose importance in the Triad ritual is shown by the Magic Sword and the Seven-Starred Lamp. The Dragon King, whose name is associated with the mountain over which the Hung Heroes must climb before they reach the Hung boat, is also a popular Taoist divinity. Despite what has been written above, it is important to bear in mind that the genuine Taoist teaching, even to-day, is that a man is punished or rewarded here and now, and not in the next world, but some of the more ignorant Taoists have borrowed the Buddhist conceptions of Heaven and Hell, and teach them as part of their system.

The authentic Taoist teaching on the subject is that Heaven has allotted a life of almost unlimited extent to every mortal, but for every misdeed a number of days, or years, are struck off his allotted span. Thus the virtuous will have long life and prosperity and the evil will experience the reverse. Should a man's crimes be so many and bad that he is cut off too soon to clear his score, his descendants suffer for him. We therefore see at once that in its main features the Triad ritual of the journey must be Buddhist, although, perhaps out of deference to Taoist opinions, there is no journey through Hell. Even this omission, however, may be due merely to the belief that no Hung Hero could ever deserve Hell. On the subject of the soul the Taoists are very vague, but we may, perhaps, regard the general belief, held by most Chinese, that man has three souls, as representing their views.

The official Buddhist teaching divides the non-physical man into five



A SILK PICTURE OF SHOU SHAN, THE TAOIST PARADISE.

constituent elements as follows:— 1. Form (Rupa); 2. Sensation (Vedana); 3. Perception (Sanjua); 4. Combination of faculties (Sanskara); 5. Consciousness (Vijnana), which last is the immortal part. It is undoubtedly this five-fold nature of man to which we get so many symbolical references in the ritual, e.g., the Five Ancestors, etc.. Although I have made numerous references to the five senses, so as to enable my Western readers to co-ordinate the symbolism with that understood by us in the term the five senses, it should be realised that there is a distinctly different conception in the Buddhist mind between their five constituent parts and the five senses of physical man, e.g., smell, sight, etc.. For all that, at times they themselves are apt to become a little confused as to the exact meaning of the symbol 5. For the purpose of the ritual we can practically ignore the triple soul of indigenous Chinese conception, except where such terms as *The Sworn Brother* and the *Adopted Brother* occur, and consider that the "Soul of the Dark Land," as subdivided by the Buddhists into five, is the thing being symbolised.

We have now seen what appear to be the chief contributions to the Hung Ceremony of the three great religions in China.

1. The bulk of the moral teaching is Confucian, tinged with Buddhist, and possibly with a certain number of Taoist, ideas, for the latter have quite a fine moral code, though it differs but little from that of Confucius.

2. Buddhism contributes the bulk of the framework of the journey, and its persecutions have influenced the Order politically, particularly in the legend.

3. Taoism has strengthened the somewhat nebulous Buddhist conceptions of the Supreme Being, and turned them into a definite belief in God, but a God of a mystical nature. It has also contributed a number of details, including certain magical articles and formula and some characters of a semi-divine nature.

One thing, however, is noticeable, the most degraded forms of Taoism and corrupt Buddhism are entirely absent. Whatever may happen outside, there are no charms or exorcisms employed in the Hung Lodge. Remnants of magic there are, indeed, as there are in Freemasonry, but, as among us, the Triad has allegorised these and turned them into symbols of higher things.

The ritual as it stands to-day is clearly mystical as well as allegorical, but since Buddhism, like Taoism, has a mystical school, we cannot give the credit of this teaching exclusively, or even mainly, to either. We can, however, say definitely that in it Confucianism has no part at all, and history shows that in the main it is, and always has been, hostile, not only to the teaching of the Hung Society, but to that organisation itself; thus the only reference to Confucius in the whole ceremony is in the dedicatory verse over the writing materials, where the reason for its inclusion is obvious.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WILLOW PATTERN PLATE.



HAVING considered the three great religions of China in order to see what light they throw on the Hung rituals, we will now turn to something which at first sight may appear to have little to do with them, or with the Society, but which I hope to show probably has a close connection with both. Doubtless most of my readers have seen many examples of the "Willow pattern plate,"¹ and many of them know the story which purports to explain the scene or scenes depicted, but for the benefit of those who may not know the pretty legend it follows here:—²

Once upon a time there lived a very rich Mandarin who, after a long life spent in oppressing and plundering the poor cultivators of the soil,³ retired to a fine palace on the banks of a broad river. He had a beautiful daughter, named Koong See, and also a private secretary, named Chang. In due course these two young people fell in love, and it was not long before the Mandarin discovered the fact and promptly dismissed Chang from his service, for he had decided to bestow his daughter on an old, ugly, but rich, duke, and would not think of her marrying a humble scholar like Chang. He warned Chang that if he again attempted to see Koong See he would be slain, and locked up the girl in a suite of rooms behind his banquet hall, where he always sat. As the suite was surrounded on three sides by water he thought she was perfectly safe, and considered that the balcony which overhung the river would enable her to obtain sufficient fresh air and sunshine to keep her healthy. Therefore, to make assurance doubly sure, he built a stout wall across the path which led down to the bridge which linked the palace gardens with the mainland.⁴

After a time the Mandarin informed his daughter that he had betrothed her

¹According to Alexander Moring in his delightful little Monograph published by the De la More Press, Limited, the earliest English varieties of china using this design were those made at Caughley Porcelain Works, Shropshire, about 1780, while Spode was the principal factory responsible for the popularity of the design, but its true origin is shrouded in complete mystery. One type of Chinese plate which, though not identical, is very similar, is the Canton pattern, and as the Hung Society has always been very strong in that city the name may be significant.

²The origin of the story is unknown, but one of the earliest printed accounts is in *The Family Friend*, Vol. I. 1849.

³According to another version he was a corrupt Custom's Official.

⁴A glance at the illustration op. p. 40 will show that this explanation of the wall in the design is totally incorrect, for it in no way closes the road to the island, via the bridge. This is but one of the many small points which indicate that the story has been invented to explain the plate, and is not the origin of it. Had the wall been intended to prevent Koong See from reaching the bridge it would have passed between the willow and the peach tree.

to a duke and she was to be married when the peach trees bloomed in the Spring. But shortly before the fatal day she received a message from Chang that he would manage to see her before the wedding, and suggesting that they should elope. A few days later the Duke called to see her father and gave him a box of jewels for the future bride. These the Mandarin handed to Koong See and then returned to the banquet hall to entertain his future son-in-law. While they were thus engaged, Chang, clad like one of the servants, passed boldly through the hall, shifted a large screen so as to cover his retreat, and then went into the suite of rooms where Koong See was kept prisoner. The lady needed no persuading, but gave him the box of jewels to carry, picked up her distaff, and, followed by him, quietly crept through the banquet hall out into the garden. They had only just reached the bridge when the Mandarin gave chase, brandishing a whip, and there are three figures shown on the bridge.¹

Owing to the amount of wine the Mandarin had drunk his movements were somewhat uncertain, and the two lovers outran him and escaped to the mainland.² The former nurse³ of Koong See met them on the other side of the river and took them to her own house, which is shown in the plate, at the left hand corner. Here they were married, and lived for a short time in safety, but after a while soldiers who had been sent in search of them came to the house and demanded admission. The back of the house overhung the river, and while the nurse held the soldiers in parley at the front door Chang jumped into the river, swam out to mid-stream and brought back a boat which was moored there. In this he carried off Koong See to safety.⁴

In this boat they travelled into the Yang-tse Kiang,⁵ and at length came to a small island where they decided to settle. They sold some of the jewels and with the proceeds bought the island, where Chang built a house and cultivated the soil. Here they lived for many years in great content and had several children, of whom one of the boys later became a Chinese Sage. Un-

¹At a later point I shall show why I consider these cannot be the three characters in this story, but it is well at this stage to point out one curious omission. How is it that the father got so near to the runaways and yet there is no sign, anywhere, of the prospective bridegroom in pursuit. He may have been old and decrepit but surely he would have reached the door, at least, if only to encourage the Mandarin.

²The picture shows, however, that the bridge led on to an island and was separated from the other side of the river by a far wider expanse of water than that which separated it from the Palace of the Mandarin. Also there is some sort of shrine near the bridge on the island, corresponding to the Ancestral Tablets near the Hung Bridge.

³According to Alexander Mooring, the Nurse's home was on the island, and the building which I have described as the shrine is her hut. Although a most unwise place in which to take refuge, owing to its close proximity to the house of the Mandarin, yet, as it would mark a "half-way house" on the journey, it may in a sense be correct, as implying to the initiated the intermediate "Isle of the Blest," which lies halfway between this world and the City of Willows.

⁴This part is supposed to explain the boat in the design. It may be added that it seems a very large boat for one man to handle, although this is not an insurmountable objection.

⁵Yang means, Willow, Muk Yang, means the City of Willows. It should be noted that the design is called the Willow Pattern, and that the Yang-tse runs from East to West.

fortunately, however, Chang, who could not forget his literary training, wrote a book on agriculture, which became famous and brought him much renown, but it also led to his undoing, for it enabled the old Duke to discover where he dwelt.¹

So the Duke sent a detachment of soldiers,² who fell upon the island, and though Chang and his servants defended the gateway of the house for a long time he was at length cut down. As soon as she saw this, Koong See rushed into her inner chamber, fired the house, and perished amid the flames. When the Gods saw what had befallen the two lovers they were filled with pity and changed them into two immortal doves, while the Duke they afflicted with a terrible disease, which soon slew him.

SUGGESTED HUNG ORIGIN OF THE WILLOW PATTERN PLATE.

So much for the story—but I venture to suggest that it has been invented to explain the design, and is not its true origin. It may have been made up by some one entirely ignorant of its true meaning, but more probably was the explanation given to the uninitiated by the Hung brethren who circulated the design. These plates seem to have originated in South China at the end of the 8rd quarter of the 18th century, that is to say, about the time of the Rising of the Triad Society, and in the very districts in which it was strongest. I suggest that they were like the Masonic china in England of the same period, but more subtle, and conveyed to the initiated a deeper meaning. That they became popular and were copied broadcast, being carried to England, we all know, but the facts concerning the design are significant, and the details fit in more accurately with the Triad ritual than they do with the alleged story. It is obvious that if these plates were circulated by Hung brethren in order to hearten each other during a time of persecution they would have to devise some innocuous story to explain the design, and yet one which to the initiated would be sufficiently near to the original to remind them of the obligations into which they had entered. It also seems probable that the Government officials were not hood-winked, but saw through the disguise, and made a point of destroying these plates where-ever found, and if so this would explain why a genuine Chinese original of this design has never been discovered in China, although long and diligent search has been made for it.

1. The name *Willow Pattern* is quite intelligible if it refers to the City

¹There is nothing in the design to warrant this section of the story.

²Alexander Mooring has this interesting additional detail. "The Duke . . . having waited upon the Military Mandarin of the river station, and having sworn by cutting off the head of a live cock, that Chang was the person who had stolen his jewels, obtained an escort of soldiers to arrest Chang."

This is of obvious value in our enquiry, for it is the very form of oath employed in the Hung ceremony. It is, however, also used outside the Lodge by non-members, and if it stood alone would not be sufficient to decide the question. As one of numerous Triad details; however, it considerably strengthens my line of argument.

of Willows, but if it depends upon the existence of a solitary willow in the design, which has very little to do with the story, a much better name could have been chosen. There are far more peach trees than willows in the design. The peaches are "Lucky fruit" and the escape took place when the peach, and not when the willow, was in bloom.

2. The explanation of the wall is most unconvincing, as pointed out in the note on page 86, but Muk Yang City had a wall round it, and this fact is emphasised by the wall in the design, which runs right across the lower part of the plate.

8. The three figures on the bridge, are, I suggest, the three Buddhas, whose attributes are slightly disguised, or may have been misunderstood in the earlier versions, and later have been turned into a distaff, box of jewels and a whip. So far as the distaff is concerned, it should be remembered that one of the Norns on Byfrost held the distaff. I have studied a large number of these plates and the figures are so small, and the attributes held so indistinct, that any other explanation of them would be equally plausible. The distaff, for example, might easily be intended for a pair of scales which, if my theory is correct, would be a very likely emblem. As representing the three Buddhas their solitary state is perfectly explicable, but it is difficult to believe that any artist who was trying to illustrate a well-known fairy story would resist the temptation to depict the indignant Duke rushing down the steps of the banquet hall in pursuit.

4. It is clear from the design that the fugitives are going on to an island, if they are moving at all, from which obviously there is no escape, and the pair of them would have been killed at once. Furthermore, in most examples there is no sign of precipitous flight. All three figures appear to be standing still and looking towards the island, and perhaps at the boat. A Chinese artist was perfectly able to depict people running, why then, since the story required it, did he not do so?

5. The story makes no attempt to explain the presence of the small building, or shrine, whereas if the plate refers to the Hung ceremony it would be the shrine of the tablets of the "Departed brethren."

6. The old nurse may be a distorted memory of "the woman" whom the Vanguard saw on his journey after he passed the Eight Immortals, but the rest of that section is most unconvincing. Why wait in the nurse's house, near the father's palace, the most obvious place in which the Mandarin would make enquiries, when there was a boat handy in which the fugitives could escape right away from danger? As "the woman" in the Hung ritual was met with before the Vanguard reached the boat, we may consider that the house of the nurse marks the spot where the Hung Heroes board the Hung boat, but the incidents as related in the story are most unlikely.

7. The Yang-tsze Kiang is, of course, a famous river, and its inclusion in a popular tale need not have any special significance if it stood alone, but

we are specifically told that they entered the Yang-tsze after travelling for some time in the boat. Now the combination of Yang, meaning, *Willow*, and of the name of the design, *Willow Pattern*, does call to mind *Muk Yang*, the *City of Willows*, which is the ultimate goal of those who set out in the Hung Boat. We, therefore, cannot ignore the possibility that Yang-tsze is dragged into the story as a covert allusion to Muk Yang. The Willow by the Bridge, which leads to the palace of the Mandarin, suggests that that place is really Muk Yang, while the Peach Trees near by, which are carefully alluded to in the ritual, are also suggestive.

8. The tragedy at the end, particularly the burning of the house, recalls the destruction of the monastery, and is not justified by anything in the design.

9. The Mandarin starts the trouble, but it is the wicked Duke who finally destroys the lovers. In like manner it was the Emperor who gave the orders for the destruction of the monks, but it was the Prefect who carried them out.

10. The doves are most significant. As we shall see elsewhere, doves represent the soul,¹ and in the story itself this fact is emphasised, for the transformation of the unfortunate victims into doves takes place after their death. I suggest that their appearance in the design was in order to supply the necessary hint to Hung brethren that the scene depicted was really the Hung Boat, bearing the souls of those lately slain in the Rising to the Isle of the Blest, and on to Muk Yang City.²

If we consider this view probable, we shall find it worth while to interpret the plate according to the Triad ritual, and we shall find that "the order of time" is completely reversed. The Hung Boat has left the shore, and the Captain is standing at the bow. It is approaching the Isle of the Blest, and near the foot of the Bridge, on the Island, are the Tablets of the departed brethren. On the Bridge are the three Buddhas, while behind lies Muk Yang, with its temples, orchards, and great containing wall. Its name is conveyed by the presence of the willow at the entrance, but it has no living person in sight, for, as we learnt in the ritual, its houses are for the Hung Heroes when they shall have overturned Ts'ing and restored Ming. Finally, the presence of the two doves shows that we are dealing with the journey of the soul to the land beyond the grave.

The other incidents in the "story", as distinct from the design, may be disguised hints, but it is the design which concerns us here, and this explanation thereof fits it far more exactly than does the fairy tale. Thus the Mandarin is the Emperor; the Duke, the Prefect; the Lovers are the monks, and the

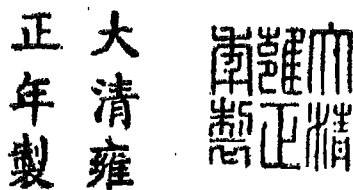
¹See Virgil, *Aeneid*. Bk. 6 in which two doves lead Aeneas to the spot where grows the "golden bough," possession of which enabled him to enter the Underworld.

²Taoist pictures of the Western Paradise are often incorporated in Chinese embroideries, screens, etc., and can be seen at the Victoria and Albert Museum. There is thus nothing intrinsically improbable in the Hung Society utilising a similar theme. See also illus. op. p. 34, wherein the Bridge, the eight Immortals and the Peach Tree are seen, while two Storks replace the Doves.



THE WILLOW PATTERN PLATE.

destruction of their home by fire is the similar destruction of the abbey. Even the banquet hall in which the Mandarin and the Duke were feasting may be a subtle reference to the feast at the monastery at which the poisoned wine was discovered. But these details are not of vital importance. The essential point is that these plates began to appear in South China just at the time when the defeated Hung brethren were prescribed and needed heartening, and that the design faithfully depicts the journey of a Hung Hero to Paradise.



REGAL TITLE AND SEAL OF
YONG CHENG. 1723-35.

CHAPTER V.

THE UNDERWORLD AS CONCEIVED BY THE ANCIENTS.



It now behoves us to leave for a time the ancient civilisation of China and wander far afield throughout the whole world, in order that I may convince my readers that the journey of the Hung Heroes is indeed the journey of the Soul through the Underworld. In the course of our investigation we shall find that certain landmarks continually reappear in the various stories and beliefs which will be discussed in the following chapters. It is clear that these landmarks, such as the Bridge and the Gates, cannot be mere coincidences, and their presence in stories drawn from areas so far apart indicates, either that they have been diffused from some one centre, or that, although independently evolved, they represent facts believed by many races, and are due to a mistaken idea concerning the shape of the world. It seems therefore desirable to describe the early conceptions held by man of the shape of the visible universe. Logically, perhaps, this chapter should follow the legends, since much of the evidence for it is contained in these stories, but to many the legends might prove meaningless if they had not envisaged the world as our ancestors saw it.

To our scientific minds the conception of the world as a plate, and not a globe, seems childish, but as some justification for this belief we must remember that primitive man was merely acting on the strictly practical and scientific maxim—"Observe nature." On the other hand, the majority of the people who consider the world to be a globe do so by faith alone, and have never tried to test the statements of scientists for themselves, although to the casual observer these appear to run quite contrary to what we seem to see.

Perhaps the clearest description of the ancient conception of the shape of the world is found in the *Younger Edda of Snorro*, and in the *Elder Edda of Saemund*. These were written down in the opening years of the 12th century and contained the old traditions of the Norsemen. All the ancient nations, however, held similar views, and, until recently, so did the Chinese. It is, therefore, not surprising if we find in all of them, and in the Triad Rituals, certain features which correspond, and the fact that they *do* appear in those rituals is a convincing proof that my contention that the ceremony deals with the journey of the dead, is correct.

THE SHAPE OF THE WORLD.

According to primitive ideas, the world was shaped like a huge saucer whose edge was formed by a continuous chain of high mountains, which, in

the North were made of ice, or at any rate capped with it, and in the South were usually surrounded by, or belched forth, fire. These were the regions of perpetual cold and of eternal fire. The manner in which this "Saucer" was supported was variously explained; among the Norse it was upheld by a huge ash tree, *Yggdrasil*^(a); among the Eastern nations it was usually a succession of animals, each standing on the back of the other, the lowest generally being a tortoise who swam in the Ocean of Chaos. Inside the mountain rim was the Ocean, usually spoken of as a vast river, which, like a ditch, surrounded the dry land. The dry land was called *Midgard* by the Norse, or *Middle-land*, with which compare the Chinese name for China, *The Middle-Kingdom*. In the centre of *Midgard* was a high mountain, the Mountain of the Gods,^(b) and on the top of it stood Heaven, the City of the Gods, hidden from mortal sight by the clouds.

Beneath this saucer lay the *Underworld*, through which the sun passed each night, journeying over the mountain rim in the West, underground, and out again over the Eastern rim at dawn. But the sun did not go at right angles to the saucer, it travelled in an elliptical circle which in the North was canted to the South. This circle varied in shape, and so arose the belief that as each month the Sun passed through a different group of Fixed Stars, the Signs of the Zodiac, these helped or hindered its rapid progress. In Northern lands particularly it seemed to meet with specially fierce opposition when passing through Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces, and these were said to oppress the sun.

Sometimes these difficulties of the Sun became confused in the popular mind with the death and resurrection of the God of Vegetation, who in course of time became identified with the Sun God, and even absorbed some of the attributes of the Moon. In consequence, in the legends of the Dying God we sometimes hear that he remained in the Underworld only for a few hours, corresponding to a single night; for three days, corresponding with the three moonless nights which occur each month; or even for twelve days, wherein a day has been substituted for each calendar month. It is quite possible that the fact that there are three days at the Winter Solstice in which the sun never seems to alter his hour of rising or setting, and therefore the days remain the same length, caused primitive man to assume that at that time the Sun was particularly severely pressed by his foes, and this would tend to strengthen the respect for a three days' journey through the Underworld. As, apparently, there was a time when man divided the year into ten, and not twelve, calendar months, the period of ten days which often elapses may be similarly accounted for, although there are probably other reasons to which we shall refer later.

Among sea-faring races it was natural to assume that the sun travelled

(a) K. Simrock, *Die Edda*. (Stuttgart, 1882).

A. & E. Keary, *The Heroes of Asgard*.

(b) See illus. on p. 54.

in a boat across the sky, for as rain came from that place, it was *obviously* very similar to the sea on which they themselves travelled in a boat. This Solar Barque had to pause when it went over the rim in the West, and this gave the souls of the dead an opportunity of entering it. Sometimes, as among the Egyptians, the sun was supposed to get out of his day boat and enter another boat, in which he made his journey through the Underworld, changing again into the Boat of Dawn in the East. How the old Dawn Boat got back to its original station is not clear: perhaps it did not, and a new one was required each day, both in the East and in the West.

The souls thus went in the Solar Barque through the Underworld, which must be envisaged as a huge tunnel, entered and left by a cave. When they came out of this tunnel in the East they did not want to go on with the sun over the world again, but to reach Heaven, and the Rainbow Bridge which spanned the world, and whose crown rested on the Holy Mountain in the centre, was their obvious path. On the crown of this bridge, according to the Norse, dwelt the Three Norns, or Fates, who represented Time, Past, Present and Future—perhaps the earliest conception of the Trinity. By them was a Holy Fountain which poured down in a cascade and watered the world. The Norns bring to mind the three Buddhas of the Triad ritual, and the Fountain of Urda reminds us of the obscure phrase in the ritual, "And the waters reached unto the Heavens."

The Norse also tell of a well, which lies in the Underworld towards the North and is identified with the Well of Wisdom, to purchase a draught from which Odin gave one of his eyes: into this ran the surplus water of the world. The great River of Ocean poured in a cataract between two high mountains in the West, and then journeyed on in another Underground river, which flowed from the West, by the South, and out through the East. It was on this Underground River that the Solar Barque made its journey. To the North of it lay the Middle Land of Hell, the *covered-in place*, which corresponds to Midgard of the upper world, and in the centre of this middle land, instead of a Mountain of the Gods, was a deep pit, at the bottom of which lay the *City of the Ruler of the Underworld*.^(a)

Fortunate travellers, the souls of the righteous, might be able to travel in the Solar Barque and never set foot in this dismal land, but apparently the unrighteous were not permitted to go on the Solar Barque, but had to make their way on foot, and many never "came forth by day" in the East. The exact cause which separated those who might enter into Heaven from those who had to remain for ever in the Underworld varied according to the stage of spiritual evolution reached by each particular race, as we shall see from the legends. Among the Norse only fighting men could enter Asgard, and this for a very practical reason—their help was needed to hold the Holy City on

(a) See illus. op. p. 48.

the Dread Day of Ragnarok. The Gods had no use for non-fighters, for women, or for children. Among the Greeks even a first class fighting man, like Achilles, was not deemed worthy of admission to Olympus, but the Christians taught that rich and poor, strong and weak, could enter Heaven if their lives had been righteous.

At the Western Gate of the Underworld was a narrow strand, and here the dead congregated in order to cross the Underground River of Ocean to the Middle Land, either by means of a ferry boat or by a bridge. We get the latter in the Norse legend and the former in the Greek and Roman. This ferry boat is at times difficult to distinguish from the Solar Barque. It will thus be seen that we get two bridges on the journey, one leading into the Middle Land of the Underworld, and the other stretching from the Mountains of the Dawn to the City of the Gods, perched on the mountain in the centre. In the Triad ritual we get a dim remembrance of the first bridge and a fairly clear account of the Celestial Bridge.

The souls who had to journey on foot passed across the Middle Land until they reached the brink of the pit, and at some stage in the journey had to appear in the Hall of Judgment. Often the ruler of the Underworld sat in a palace in a city at the bottom of the pit. It is thus that Hela sits in the Norse legends, and we meet with this city under the name of *Dis* in Virgil and Dante. In some of the later legends the bridge into Hell is described as spanning this pit, for example, in St. Patrick's Purgatory, but this may be a misplacement. If the souls are allowed to pass the mouth of the pit they journey on through the Middle Kingdom of the Underworld till they reach the gateway in the East, and begin to ascend one of the two mountains which act as Pillars of the Dawn, between which the sun seems to appear each morning. Those who have come by boat land at the foot of this mountain, and also climb it. The mountain thus ascended is apparently on the left hand side as the traveller comes out of the Underworld; in other words, it is the Northern Pillar of the Dawn.

Having climbed this mountain the travellers find themselves on a beautiful plateau, described as Paradise, and as they look towards the centre of the visible world they are above the clouds, which lie like a sea beneath them, and in the distance see the top of the Holy Mountain and the golden turrets of the Holy City of the Gods. Sometimes these clouds are confounded with the Milky Way. Thus in the East three rivers meet, the *Underground River*, the *River of Ocean* and the *River of the Milky Way*, or *Clouds*, and these, no doubt, are the three rivers of the Hung ritual. Across this celestial river runs the Rainbow Bridge. Sometimes the traveller is permitted to cross it, but sometimes he has to wade until he reaches the golden gates and enters the Haven at last. The Norse legend says that all the gods except Thor were allowed to go by the bridge; he had to ford, but he got there as soon as they did. It will be remembered that the Hung Heroes crossed by stepping stones. Often the

Earthly Paradise is placed in the West, not the East, and it is possible that the bridge there is the Western half of the rainbow, and in that case there would be no need for the souls of the righteous to pass through the Underworld, either on the Solar Barque or on foot.

INFLUENCE OF THESE BELIEFS ON INITIATION RITES.

This, then, was the primitive conception of the world, and explains much of the framework of all legends and Rites which teach of the journey of the soul after death. Many of these conceptions developed only by degrees, and in the earliest legends, such as those of Australia and the Red Indians, man's conception was not so clear cut and precise as it was among the Norse. Furthermore, in the course of ages, as new ideas developed, some of the older beliefs became distorted, the ancient landmarks became displaced, and the journey is not always as easy to follow as in this account. For all that it is really surprising how long the old traditions have lingered and how carefully the ancient landmarks have been preserved. Perhaps this is due to the fact that, even before men discarded this conception of the shape of the world, the more spiritually minded had evolved new and inner religious meanings, and on these had again grafted mystical interpretations as to the inner strivings which disturb the heart of man. Therefore, even when the old conception of the shape of the world vanished in the light of more scientific knowledge, the allegory remained, for by then it contained religious beliefs and mystical ideas too precious to be lost.

Before turning to the various legends, however, let my readers study the two Chinese plans of a Lodge room in Volume I, bearing in mind that they are not supposed to indicate the actual arrangement of a room, but are notes on the allegorical journey. They will perceive that round the edge of the plan runs the River of Ocean and a range of mountains, thus indicating that the journey of the Hung Boat is that of the Solar Barque across the world and under the world. The two planks of the bridge may have originated in the striped effect produced by the rainbow, and the high crown of a Chinese bridge faithfully reproduces the arch of the rainbow.¹

¹The fact that according to English folk tales the entrance to Fairy land is at the foot of a rainbow, is due no doubt to the belief that fairies live in the Underworld, just over the edge of the rim of mountains.



N

W

THE UNDERWORLD AS CONCEIVED BY THE ANCIENTS.
(Note the City of Dis and the Infernal Bridge).

CHAPTER VI.

YOONECARA THE FEARLESS.

(THE JOURNEY OF AN AUSTRALIAN BLACK).



THE framework of the degree consists of three main sections. (a) The Traditional History; (b) the Passing of Three Gates; (c) a long Mystical Journey. The Traditional History and the Mystical Journey will be considered in Volume III, but the latter is so intimately connected with Section (b) that it must also form part of this Volume.

The whole journey taken by the candidate during the ceremony is really beyond the grave, but in many of the legends dealing with this theme which we are about to consider some sections of the journey seem to be envisaged as if on earth. Primitive man is somewhat vague in his abstract conceptions, and even members of the same tribe will give contradictory accounts of their teaching concerning what befalls the dead. It would appear as if the most primitive races envisaged the next world as situated upon the surface of this earth in some remote area, usually in the West towards the setting sun, and this version is the one set out in the story of Yoonecara. The next stage seems to have been to transfer the gods, at any rate, to the sky, and sometimes the happy souls as well. Some of the Southern Australian Blacks hold this view, as do some of the Red Indian tribes. The final stage was to place the dead in the Underworld, which was regarded as a replica of the earth, as previously described, while the gods, and perhaps a few chosen heroes, were in a City on the Mountain top, or actually in the sky itself. At this stage of development Heaven is often a replica of earth, just as is the Underworld. Thus it is sometimes possible to find similar features in Heaven and the Underworld; as for example, three divisions or gates in the Underworld and three similar gates or divisions in Heaven. We get clear traces of this idea in the Hung ritual, where the three gates passed on the journey to the City of Willows are in correspondence with the three passes which are supposed to have been traversed before the candidate reaches the Lodge room at all, while the Rainbow Bridge, linking earth and heaven, is represented in the Underworld by the bridge linking hell and earth. This appears in the Traditional History as the first bridge, or causeway, which was seen by the monks amid the flames of the abbey, while it is represented in the actual ritual by the stone bridge which had to be passed some time before the Lodge building was entered.

This duplication must be borne in mind, and is an example of the well known Rosierucian principle, "As above, so below." Owing to this duplication, at times it will be impossible to decide whether a particular gate, or division, is in the Underworld or in Heaven, but it seems clear that just as man envisaged the gods in his own image, so in like manner he conceived of heaven and the underworld as replicas of the earth as he understood it.

The story of Yoonecara is, probably, the most primitive example of this type of legend which we possess, and when studying it we must remember that Biame¹ is the god of initiation among some of the Australian aborigines, and in one of the Bora ceremonies the initiates enter in turn three circles, go on a long journey through the bush, pass over the image of Biame, stretched out as though on the cross of the equinox, and under an arch of boomerangs held by the fully initiated men.⁽²⁾ This latter reminds us of the arch of crossed swords in the Hung ceremony, which is called, *Crossing the Bridge*, while the three circles bear a distinct resemblance to the three gates of the Hung ritual, and the three dangerous areas Yoonecara had to cross. The fact that words of power have to be given, just as the Generals have to be satisfied in the Hung ceremony, supports this view. It seems probable that the story of Yoonecara is really the secret tradition of the initiation rite of a Medicine Man to which we shall refer later in the chapter, and those who would like to study it in detail will find it, with many other quaint Australian stories, in an excellent little book entitled, *Myths and Legends of the Australian Aborigines*, by W. E. Thomas.

THE STORY OF YOONECARA.

Once, long years ago, there lived a mighty chief of the Kamilaroi tribe named Yoonecara, and he decided to visit the home of his great ancestor Biame, who dwelt in the land beyond the Setting Sun. No one was brave enough to accompany him on this dangerous journey and so, having armed himself and placed provisions in his "dilly-bag," he set forth alone.

Day by day he travelled towards the West, until at last he came to a land where dwelt men with the feet of emus. The emu-men were called *Dhinna-barrada* on account of this peculiarity, and they were great magicians. If they could manage to touch the legs and feet of a man his legs became like their own, emu-legs. As soon as they saw Yoonecara they determined to work their magic spells upon him, but he was on his guard and had come prepared. Now in that land there were no bandicoots³ and Yoonecara had brought a live one with him. So he opened his bag and let it escape, whereupon the emu-men

¹According to some legends it was Biame who invented the bull-roarer, which is used at all initiations.

²A kind of enormous rat.

⁽²⁾See *Freemasonry and the Ancient Gods*, pp. 352 sq.

gave chase, hoping to kill and eat it, and in their excitement forgot Yoonecara, who meanwhile escaped from their country.¹

After travelling West for many days he came to the land of another strange race. These were the Dheeyabry, and were of the most extraordinary shape, for although in front they looked like men, from the back they appeared to be *rolypolys*. This tribe spoke him fair and said, "O Stranger, whence come you and whither directing your steps?" Yoonecara answered, "I have journeyed far from my home in the East, which lies behind the mountains, towards the West, seeking the home of my Ancestor, the great Biame, who dwells in the Land of the Setting Sun, far beyond the sound of rushing waters and the cool breath of the breezes of night."

The Chief of the Dheeyabry tried to dissuade him from going further, saying, "The way to the home of Biame is long and difficult. Many dangers await thee, my brother, for between this place and the Land of Sunset is the dwelling place of evil spirits, who call to the traveller and sing to him magic songs through the trees. Their song is as the voice of a maiden calling to her beloved, but the man who follows their voices is lost, for he journeys on for ever and ever. Nor are these your only enemies, for in the Forest the great Black Bat lies in ambush.² Stay then with us, refresh thyself, and then return in peace to your tribe." But Yoonecara thanked him and went his way, and heeded not the voices of the Dheeyabry, who called after him saying, "Return, O Stranger, and stay with us."

For many, many days he continued his journey, till at length he reached a land where the mosquitos and flies were larger, more numerous, and more vicious than any he had previously met with in his whole life. For a long time he struggled on bravely, but at length even his iron courage gave way and, sitting down by a water hole, he lit a fire³ and considered his desperate plight, saying to himself, "If I cannot protect myself from these huge insects my bones will soon be bleaching in the sun. I fear that after all I am beaten, for the task is beyond the strength of any man. Alas, I must abandon the attempt and return to my tribe with my purpose unaccomplished."⁴ But even while he was thus meditating a plan occurred to him whereby he could protect himself from the attacks of the giant insects. This plan he immediately adopted, and

¹These emu-men seem to have an affinity with the cock-legged devils of the mediæval frescoes. In the painting of the Last Judgment at Basle we see such demons carrying off the damned. See illustration op. p. 70.

²The magic forest of fairy tales. It will be noticed that Yoonecara apparently does not hear these spirits but instead is attacked by giant mosquitoes. Possibly the spirits changed themselves into the form of mosquitoes because they knew the traveller had been put on his guard, but more probably the *rolypoly* men deliberately deceived him. The question "Whence come you" reminds us of the Master's question to the Vanguard.

³It should be noted that when Lucian and his companions were swallowed by the great whale one of the first things they did was to light a fire by means of a friction stick, the mention of which article shows that this was a religious ceremony, for normally the Greeks used flint and steel.

⁴Compare the Slough of Despond in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

stripping off a sheet of bark from a tree sufficiently long to protect his body, he tied it round himself. He then, in like manner, tied bushes round his ankles and head, and, thus protected, was able to defy his tormentors: At length he found that he had passed through the land of the Giant Insects, and so he removed his bark covering and placed it in a water-hole, to keep it soft so that he could use it again on his return.¹

After having surmounted this danger his courage returned and he went on boldly, nor did he for awhile meet with any further adventures, but at length he came to a marsh named *Kolliworoogla* and could find no path across it, nor any way round. Then, indeed, he thought that further progress was impossible but after a long search he discovered the trunk of a fallen tree, which completely bridged the marsh, and across it he passed in safety to the other side.² Here the country assumed a more pleasing appearance and presently he saw a great cliff on one side of which was a cave. As he approached it he was able to see therein his ancestor, Biame, asleep, and that he was of gigantic proportions, much larger than any black fellow of the present day.³

Outside the cave sat Biame's daughter, Byallaburragan, roasting a carpet snake in front of a fire. As soon as she saw Yoonecara she offered him a piece, saying, "O faithful heart, long and weary has been your journey, and many the dangers which you have surmounted. Like the light of the sun was the fire of your courage, and this shall be your reward. Your name shall be handed down from generation to generation as the only man who journeyed to the home of Biame and returned, for never again shall mortal man do the like."⁴

Soon after Biame awoke and talked with the hero. The land in which he dwelt was more beautiful and fertile than any the traveller had previously seen. The grass grew as tall as a man, the stream which ran in front of the cave was crystal clear, and the lagoon into which it emptied its waters was well stocked with fish and water fowl. In this land there was always shade, even at mid-day, and a cool breeze, while overhead the birds sang melodiously.⁵ After he had rested in this smiling land and refreshed himself,

¹The exact meaning of this part of the story is not clear, but among many Australian tribes it is customary to wrap the dead body in a piece of bark, with bushes round the head and feet, and place it in a tree. This procedure may imply that he left his physical body behind at the water hole and subsequently resumed it when he returned from the land beyond the grave. Clearly he could not enter the next world in a physical body.

²Here we have the second bridge of the Hung ritual, and it should be compared with the experience of the knight after he had crossed the Bridge of Dread in St. Patrick's Purgatory.

³The cave is the humble beginning of the Golden City, while the gigantic stature of Biame, like that of some of the characters in the *Mabinogion*, indicates his semi-divine nature. It seems probable that he represents the Sun. See Ward, *Who was Hiram Abiff?* pp. 199-222.

⁴In the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh the latter is also received by a man and a woman, in this case the wife, and not the daughter, of the divine being. Among the Chinese Amitabha Buddha is assisted by his daughter, Kwan Yin, in the Western Paradise. The carpet snake typifies celestial food.

⁵Compare with the fields of the Blessed in the Egyptian Tuat and the rice fields and orchards in the Chinese City of Willows.

Yoonecara returned in safety to his own tribe and told them all that had befallen him. Soon after he died, and since then no living man has ever travelled to the Land of the Setting Sun.

Thus ends this simple story told by a primitive race. If my readers are inclined to smile at some of the childish references, such as the carpet snake, let them remember that primitive man is but a child, and respect this, probably the oldest version of the journey of the soul from earth to heaven. It should be noted that Yoonecara dies soon after his return, for those who have talked with the gods and walked in Paradise long to return, and earth cannot hold them captives.

Among the tribes of New South Wales, when first the white man came amongst them some held that the dead went beyond the great waters, but the majority thought that they went to a land above the clouds^(a). Among the Narrinyeri tribe of South Australia the belief was that the dead went to the sky and some became stars.^(b) This belief is brought out in the following story.

THE LAND ABOVE THE TREE.

Some white men recently found an old, lame man, living among a tribe of black fellows in Australia, who was reputed to have visited the other world. So they questioned him, and he told them the following tale, adding, "Since then I have searched year after year for that happy land but I cannot find the way to it, and I think I shall only reach it when I die." This, then, is his story:—

"One day I climbed up a tall gum tree to reach some grubs, and suddenly found that I had climbed into a new country,¹ much more beautiful than that which I had left. The grass was as tall as a man and the birds and fish were so plentiful that no one could possibly lack food. I was surprised to see my father and mother, who had long been dead, coming towards me, and they greeted me with joy. Then I saw several friends who had died, and also others whom my father declared to be my ancestors. Suddenly, however, I felt a sharp pain, the fair landscape vanished and I found myself lying at the foot of the gum tree I had climbed. My leg was broken and it was only with great difficulty that I crawled back to our camping ground."

The white men's comment was, "The poor chap evidently fell, lost consciousness and dreamed of his fairy land."² No doubt they were right, but,

¹Here the *Bridge* is represented by a *growing* tree and not one which lies horizontally over a marsh as in the previous story. Compare the ladder in a certain Masonic degree.

²Compare the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. At the top of the beanstalk he finds himself in a new world. The giant, no doubt, represents some long forgotten god.

(a)Lieut. Col. D. Collins, *An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*, 2nd ed., (London, 1804), p. 854.

(b)Rev. G. Taplin, *The Narrinyeri in Native Tribes of South Australia*. (Adelaide, 1879) p. 18.

after all, who knows where our souls go when we are unconscious? It may be that sometimes they *do* go to the other world, and stories such as this and the preceding one represent the distorted memory which the soul brings back with it to conscious life on earth.

Since we are dealing with this theme in connection with a definite initiation rite, it is particularly interesting to find that, among some of the Australian tribes, the special ceremony which turns an ordinary initiated tribesman into a Medicine Man, or Master of Ceremonies, represents his journey to the next world and his return therefrom. Moreover, since the usual place of initiation is a cave, we see here the definite beginning of a belief that the souls live in the Underworld. These men declare that after entering a certain cave they are carried off by spirits, slain, disembowelled and have new spirit intestines placed in them by the ghosts. The victims return in a dazed state, due undoubtedly to the severe mauling which they have undergone, but there is probably also a certain amount of play acting in their pretended ignorance as to their past lives, for they are supposed to be *New Born*. They have to pretend, however, that they recognise no one, not even their wives, until they have been re-introduced to them by the presiding Medicine Man.

Among the Arunta of Alice Springs the would-be Medicine Man enters a cave, which is supposed to be inhabited by spirits and to lead to the realms of the dead. This land is a veritable earthly paradise and reminds us of the description in the story of Yoonecara. The candidate lies down in the entrance and passes into a heavy sleep. Then one of his ancestral spirits creeps up to him and drives a "spirit" spear through the back of his neck and through his tongue, so as to make the latter cleave to the roof of his mouth. He then thrusts the spear through the victim's head, so that it enters at one ear and passes out at the other. This blow "kills him" and the spirit carries away his body to Paradise, cuts it open, replaces his old physical intestines by new spirit ones, and then restores him to life.^(a)

No doubt the spirits are represented by disguised Medicine Men, and undoubtedly a sharp instrument is driven through the tongue of the candidate, for a hole in this member, large enough to allow a little finger to be inserted therein, is the badge of a newly installed Medicine Man. In this ceremony not only is the man supposed to be slain, but he is also supposed to visit the land of the spirits and to be restored therefrom. In like manner the Hung Hero is symbolically led through the Underworld into Heaven.

(a)B: Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 528 sq..

CHAPTER VII.

THE JOURNEY OF THE DEAD IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS.

THE TORRES STRAITS ISLANDS.



AMONG the people of these islands, who constitute, as it were, a link between Australia and New Guinea, it is believed that the spirits of the dead go to a mythical island in the North West. The name used for this place by the inhabitants of the Western part of the Torres Straits is *Kibu*, which means, *Sun-down*, and, as Dr. Haddon^(a) points out, a very practical reason why these islanders should place the land of the dead in the West is that for two-thirds of the year the Trade winds blow from the South-East, and thus would bear the departing spirits towards the North-west. The ghosts would be too weak to battle against an adverse wind. The fact, however, that the Isles of the Blest are usually placed in the West, as we shall see later, shows that there is some more widespread and universal cause for the choice of their situation, and it seems clear that even to the most primitive savage there appears to be some mysterious link between the sun, which is one of the chief sources of life on this planet, and the lives of man. The *Kibu* of the Torres Straits clearly corresponds with the *Western Paradise* of the Chinese and the *Island of the Blest* in the Hung ritual.

NEW GUINEA.¹

The Kiriwina are a race of Melaneseans of British New Guinea who occupy the Trobriand Islands. According to these people, at death the "soul" divides, one part being called the *Kosi* and the other the *Baloma*. The former seems to behave very much as do the Poltergeists of the Spiritualists. It remains near the village of the deceased and sometimes plays rather foolish pranks and practical jokes on the living, but it is not in the least malignant and would never seriously harm anyone. The *Kosi* must not be confounded with certain ghoulish spirits of living female sorcerers, who are supposed to feed on the corpses of the dead and are most malignant to the living.

It is the *Baloma*, however, which really interests us, for it is this soul which goes to the Underworld, where it lives for a time and then dies, in order

¹For what follows I must express my deep indebtedness to Dr. A. C. Haddon who drew my attention to the valuable work by Mr. B. Malinowski, *Baloma: The Spirits of the Dead in the Trobriand Islands*, pub. by the Royal Anthropol. Inst., also for much other valuable help on the subject.

(a) *Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits*, V. 353 sq., VI. 252.

that it may be re-born on earth. At death the Baloma leaves the body and journeys to the *Island of Tuma*, where it dwells with the other spirits. Now Tuma is a real, physical island, near the Trobriand Islands, it has a real village, also called Tuma, inhabited by mortal men, and is often visited by natives of the Trobriand Islands in the course of trade. But it is also the geographical position of the ghostly Tuma which, according to some accounts, is underground, and according to others is on the same spot as the village, but in either case is invisible to mortal men. Although ordinary mortals can see neither it nor the spirits, a few specially gifted seers are believed to have the power of visiting this ghostly Tuma, of conversing with the dead, and of bringing back messages from them. In short, they are mediums and, like modern mediums in the West, visit these realms whilst in the trance or dream state.¹

There are also records of the Baloma being seen in the physical island of Tuma by quite ordinary mortals.

THE JOURNEY OF THE BALOMA.

The Baloma sets out towards Tuma, which is an island North West from Boiowa, and on reaching the coast finds a "spirit boat" which carries him over to Tuma, where he disembarks and sits down on a stone called, *Modarwosi*. Here the Baloma sits and wails because he remembers those he has left behind among the Kiriwina on earth. After a while he rises and goes to a well, called *Gilala*, and washes his eyes, which makes him invisible to mortals.² Then the dead man "proceeds to Dukopuala, a spot in the Raiwoag where there are two stones called, *Dikumaio*."³ The deceased knocks these two stones in turn; the first responds with a loud sound, but when the second is hit the earth trembles." The other "Baloma hear this sound and they all congregate round the newcomer and welcome him to Tuma."⁴

The deceased has now to obtain permission to reside in Tuma from Topileta, and for the privilege must pay him a fee. This fee consists of the baloma,

¹Some appear to be genuine, at any rate they do not intentionally deceive their compatriots, and believe that they see the Baloma, others are certainly frauds who claim powers they do not possess in order to gain renown, or profit, from the credulous. See pp. 364-5 of B. Malinowski's Monograph.

²This was the explanation given to Mr. Malinowski by one of the natives, but the others did not know the reason. Possibly a more important reason was to cleanse the eyes of the soul from earthly limitations, and so enable it to see the other Baloma. Compare with the washing of the face in the Hung ritual.

³The well, the three stones, and the other places mentioned are real physical objects which can be seen by mortals, who cannot see the Baloma around them.

⁴These would correspond to the Gate of the Hall of Judgment. The First Stone marks the Entrance; the Well, the Underground River; the journey to Dukopuala, the Middle Land. The second Triad Gate, which leads to the Hall of Loyalty, is here represented by these two stones. Topileta corresponds much more closely with the Greek Pluto, or Aides, than with Charon, although the natives themselves are not very clear where he meets the deceased. Perhaps he combines the duties of both.



B
THE EARTH AS CONCEIVED BY THE ANCIENTS.

Note the Mountain of the Gods, and

- (A) The Earthly Paradise in the East.
- (B) The Gateway of Dawn.
- (C) The Gateway of Sunset.

or ghosts, of his ornaments, axe blades, etc. For this reason these real articles are placed on the body of the dead man at his funeral, although the natives do not suppose that the actual ornaments go with him to the next world, but their "spiritual forms" or "baloma" accompany him while their bodies, like his, remain on earth. The dead man presents a portion of these to Topileta as a fee for showing him the proper way to Tuma. Topileta then asks him the cause of his death.¹ There are three, and only three, recognised causes of death among the natives. (a) Death in warfare, which is a good death.² (b) Death by poison, not so good. (c) Death by magic, which is a bad death.

There are three roads³ to Tuma, and on hearing how the man died Topileta indicates which of the three he must follow. So far as Malinowski could ascertain there was no difference as to the nature of these roads, nor could he be certain that they led respectively to the three different villages mentioned. These spirit villages belong to Topileta and are named, *Tuma* proper, *Wabuaima* and *Walisiga*, but the exact nature of his power over them is difficult to define. Both men and women are treated alike in Tuma, but it is the wife of Topileta, Bomiamuia, who shows the *women* the way. The fate of those who cannot pay the necessary fee for admission is very hard, they are refused entrance and changed into mythical fish, *Vaiaba*, which are said to have the head and tail of a shark and the body of a stingaree. They would appear henceforth to have to live in the sea, but apparently this really never happens, so we must suppose that relations are generous or Topileta moderate in his demands.

The natives' view as to the exact nature of Topileta are vague.⁴ Prof. Seligman says, "Topileta resembles a man in every way except that he has huge ears⁵ which flap continually . . . he seems to lead very much the ordinary life of a Trobriand Islander . . . he has certain magical powers; causes earthquakes at will and, when he becomes old, makes medicine which restores youth to himself, his wife and children."⁽⁶⁾ Chiefs still retain

¹Here, perhaps, we get the embryo of a judgment, but as yet there seems to be no moral qualification. We may, however, be mistaken, for the fact that death in war is "a good death" reminds us that this was the proof of fitness for Asgard among the Norse.

²With death in war is also classed one form of suicide, which consists of casting oneself from the top of a tree. This was done when one had suffered wrong at the hands of a relation. The only other form of suicide known is by self-poisoning, and this is grouped with death (b). With death (a) is also classed death by drowning.

³Compare the three roads in the Hung ritual. There probably was once a definite significance in the three roads and the three villages, which has been forgotten, and so it is unwise to dogmatise as to their original specific meaning. It is possible that the "good death" in war led by its own path to the best village, reserved for the brave, etc., and that there was thus the rudimentary idea of Heaven, Paradise, and Purgatory.

⁴Clear and analytical thought is of late development in the evolution of man and hardly exists at all among primitive races. We must not expect them to analyse their own vague beliefs on non-material subjects in the way civilised man can, but often does not, do.

⁵Note, in Burma Buddha is depicted with very big ears, which are said to be the sign of royal lineage!

⁽⁶⁾Dr. C. G. Seligman, *The Melanezians of British New Guinea*, p. 733.

their rank in Tuma but their exact authority over the dead members of their tribe is uncertain, and so is the precise position of Topileta who, though the most important person in Tuma, does not seem to interfere much with the life of the spirits once he has admitted them.

When the deceased reaches the village in which he is to dwell he always finds a number of relations and a house is built for him, but he is not left to inhabit it alone for long. He may want to sit and mourn for his lost wife and children, and for a short while his spirit relatives will protect him from the attentions of the female Baloma, but before long he is bound to succumb. If the obvious allurements of the ladies are not sufficient they do not hesitate to resort to love charms; and they will never leave off pestering him until he takes one of them to wife.¹ With his new spirit wife the deceased settles down to a happy existence, which lasts another lifetime and terminates in a second death and re-birth. During this period the Baloma can, and does, revisit earth, and all of them annually attend a kind of *Harvest Home* which the natives on earth celebrate at the gathering in of the Yam Harvest. On that occasion the spirits come to Trobriand in a fleet of spirit canoes, and go to places specially prepared for them by the human beings, who for several days present them with food, but at the end of the *Harvest Home*, or *Milamala*, as it is called, the villages unceremoniously drive them forth. The Baloma do not seem to resent this, but they *do* become annoyed if the offerings of food during the festival are not adequate, and show their resentment by causing bad weather and a bad crop next year.

The length of life of the deceased in Tuma depends mainly on whether he was old or young when he died. The Baloma appears in form just as the man did at the time of his death. Therefore, if the deceased was a young man he lives a long time in Tuma, but if old, only a comparatively short time. When the Baloma's life is drawing to an end his teeth fall out, his skin becomes loose and wrinkled, and he goes to the sea and bathes in it. "Then he throws off his skin, just as a snake would do, and becomes a young child again:—really an embryo, a *Waiwais*—a term applied to children *in utero* and immediately after birth. A Baloma woman sees this *Waiwais* and takes it up and puts it in a basket, or a plaited and folded cocoanut leaf. She next carries the small being to Kiriwina, and places it in the womb of some woman, inserting it *per vaginam*. Then that woman becomes pregnant."²

¹So Dr. Malinowski's informants told him, but, as he wisely remarks, they were all men. Perhaps the women would have drawn a picture of a virtuous wife anxious to wait for her husband's arrival, pestered by amorous men.

²Strange though it may seem to my readers, the Kiriwina, like the Australian Bushmen, do not seem to realise that the father is as necessary as the mother for the propagation of children. The only advantage of connubial relationship, other than the pleasure it gives, is that it opens up the door through which the *Waiwais* is thrust by the Baloma woman. The door may, however, be opened equally effectually by other means. (See Malinowski, pp. 408 sq.) While we can afford to smile at their ignorance of physiological facts, they are far more logical in their explanation of how an immortal being enters a physical body than are many well educated

There is an alternative version of the end of the journey of the Baloma which is important. Many of the natives believe that after the Baloma has split its skin and come forth as an embryo it takes to the sea and lives there for some time, until it has the good fortune to catch a woman bathing, when it will itself enter her womb. For this reason at certain times unmarried girls are careful not to bathe in the sea. Many of the natives combine both beliefs, and say that a Baloma woman inserts the embryo in a mortal woman while she is bathing. In any case the embryo is always inserted in a woman of the same clan as that to which it had belonged as a man when on earth.

Now these beliefs of the Kiriwina are most important to us, as they form an invaluable connecting link between the beliefs of the Australian Bushmen and the more advanced beliefs of the Chinese. In particular, this clear enunciation of reincarnation among a primitive race is important when we are studying a Chinese secret society which is largely Buddhist in origin. The views of the Kiriwina indicate a distinct advance in spiritual development beyond the nebulous views of the Australian Bushmen, but it will be noted that they carry forward the framework of Yoonecara, giving it more definite shape and adding illuminating details.

KIRAWINA BELIEFS IN THE TRIAD RITUAL.

Let us briefly recapitulate the chief elements of the Kiriwina beliefs which have been developed into the allegory of the journey of the soul in the Triad ritual.

(a). The soul has to journey to the sea coast where it enters a boat. This is not yet the Boat of the Sun, it is merely a Spirit Boat, the former idea no doubt evolved later.

(b). It sails towards an actual island in the West. Compare this with the Earthly Paradise of Kwan Yin and of Hsi Wang Mu, which was believed to be an actual island in the West. Thus Tuma corresponds to the Isle of the Blest in the Hung ritual.¹

(c). It lands on this island as the Hung Heroes do on theirs.

(d). It sees the Shades of its departed brethren as do the Hung travellers.

(e). The stone on which the Ghost sits down represents the First Gate in the Triad Ceremony.

(f). Though there is no Bridge, the bathing of the eyes in the well implies

Englishmen, who believe that the "Immortal Soul" is created by the father at the same time as he begets the physical body. The Kiriwina's ignorance of the part the father plays in the birth of his children explains why in primitive society descent is reckoned by the female side. It is not that a particular man cannot be definitely identified as father, but that no man is a father, and the only relation of a child is the mother. It is only recently that ethnologists have definitely realised these facts.

The blending of an actual island with the spirit island is most important. The more so as the natives recognise perfectly that the spirit landscape, though there, is invisible.

THE HUNG SOCIETY.

the crossing of water. Perhaps the Baloma waded through the well. Natives usually stand in a stream and not on the bank when they wish to wash.

(g). The two stones remind us of the Gate of the Hall of Loyalty and Fidelity.

(h). Topileta foreshadows the Red Youth, Yemma of the Buddhists and Osiris in Egypt. He is of a different nature from the ordinary souls, for he does not pass on, but renews his youth perpetually. He has a wife who also renews her youth in Tuma, and the pair remind us forcibly of Amitabha and Kwan Yin, of Uta Naphistim and his wife, and of Pluto and Proserpine.

(i). The fee reminds us of the 21 Cash paid for the Peaches of Long Life in the Hung ritual, and still more of other fees, such as that which Gilgamish had to pay, and the Bridge Fee in the Royal Order of Scotland.

(j). The three paths at once remind us of the three roads open to a Hung Hero, of which he always chooses the middle one.

(k). The three villages seem to be the embryo from which were later evolved the City of the Underworld, the Earthly Paradise and the City of the Gods.

(l). The alternative views held among the natives, (a) that Tuma was on the surface of the earth, and (b) that it was under the earth, are the embryo from which developed the idea that there were two places, and not one, to which the dead might go. (1). A pleasant Earthly Paradise for the good, and (2), the Underworld, to which ordinary folk went. This latter place developed into the *Earth Prisons*, or *Hells*, of the Chinese, represented in the ritual by the Fiery Furnace, while the Earthly Paradise of the Taoists, and the Island of the Blest of Kwan Yin, are the Chinese equivalent of the former.

(m). Finally, in the rebirth of the Baloma we have that conception of reincarnation to escape which Buddha evolved Nirvana. There is, however, no mention of Nirvana in the Triad ritual, and the Hung Heroes no doubt recognised that, as yet, they were not fit to attain to that state, and must ultimately leave the City of Willows—Heaven—to be reborn on earth, as must the Baloma. The distinctly materialistic conception of the next world found among the Kiriwina is reproduced in the Triad City of Willows, although family life there is passed with those whom the hero had known on earth, and we hear nothing of the allurements of the female spirits.

We thus see that the beliefs of the savage people of New Guinea are based on the same framework as that revealed in the Triad ritual, and are even of interest to staid English gentlemen who belong to the Royal Order of Scotland.

POLYNESIA.

In the Tonga Islands the beliefs of the natives contain more than one point of interest. These people were divided into four castes, reminding us of the four chief castes of the Hindus, and apparently only the first three castes were

supposed to survive death. The departing souls entered a sailing canoe, which carried them to an island called, by some of our authorities, *Boolootoo*, and, according to others, *Doovludha*.^(a) This island, which lay to the North West, was said to be well stocked with [all] manner of beautiful and useful plants, and there the Gods and happy souls dwelt. They tell a legend of a Tongan canoe which, returning from Fiji, was driven by a storm out of its course and the crew landed in this Island of the Blest. They tried to pick some of the fruit but found that they could not grasp it, and that they were able to walk through the trunks of the trees. Presently they met some of the gods, who ordered them to return instantly. On their return to Tonga they soon died, for those who visit this mysterious island are infected by its air, which is fatal to the living.^(b)

There seems also to have been a less pleasant place where the dead were forced to act as servants to one of the gods, named *Hikuleo*, who even built his house, his fences and the bars of his gates of the souls of the dead. This appears to correspond to the place of punishment which we find in other faiths, although our authorities do not specifically say so.^(c) The main point of interest to us, however, is the sailing canoe, which to some extent reminds us of the Hung boat, and the fact that the souls go to an island in the North West, corresponding with the Isle of the Blest in the Hung ritual.

CENTRAL MELANESIA.

According to the natives of Maewo, the ghost journeys until it comes to two rocks between which is a deep chasm. It leaps this chasm and if it lands on the other side it is truly dead, but if it falls into the chasm, it returns to life on earth. This feature reminds us of the leap over the Fiery Ditch in the Hung ritual. The soul then reaches the end of the island, where on the sea shore it is met by all the ghosts of the dead, and if among them there are any who have been injured by him during life they beat and stab him. He next comes to a deep cleft and if he fails to jump across this he is broken in pieces. Finally, he is met by a fierce pig, which devours all who have not planted pandanus trees during their lives. If, however, the deceased *has* planted any of these trees he finds one of them at hand, climbs up it and escapes. After this he enters Paradise.^(d)

The last three incidents bring to mind the three gates in the Hung ritual, but in their general form they are more like the three dangers which Yoonecara had to surmount on his way to Biame.

(a) Capt. J. Wilson, *Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean*. pp. 278 sq.

(b) W. Mariner, *Tonga Islands*. I. pp. 101-108.

(c) C. Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*. III. p. 23.

(d) R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians*. pp. 279 sq.

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NORTHERN MELANESIA.^(a)

On the first day after death two men sleep one on either side of the dead man and their souls are supposed to accompany him to the next land. There they are offered betel nut, which the dead man eats but the living men refuse, for if the latter eat it they never return to earth.

These two assistants should be compared with the two assistant sojourners in the R.A., while the rule that you must not eat food in the land of the dead is the world-wide tradition which was violated with disastrous results by Persephone. In the Hung ritual the peach fruit sold to the Heroes by the old man takes the place of the betel nut. The next world of the Melanesians appears to be somewhat like this world, and there is a Supreme Ruler called, *The Keeper of Souls*, who corresponds fairly closely to the Greeks 'Aides.

FIJI.

The Fijians say that Paradise lies on an island in the West ^(b). When the soul has left its body it comes to a stretch of water across which it has to be conveyed by a ghostly ferryman in a boat. After it has reached the further side the soul begins its real journey, which is full of perils. It first comes to a Pandamus tree, at which it throws the "Ghost" of a whale's tooth (the real tooth has been buried with the dead man in his grave). If it strikes the tree the soul knows that his friends have strangled his wife and she will soon be with him, so he sits down and awaits her, but if the whale's tooth misses the tree he knows that they have failed in their duty and wails sorrowfully, since he will have no one to wait on him in the next world.^(c)

A bachelor's lot, however, is much worse, for as he comes to a dark defile on the journey a being, called, *The Great Woman*, pounces upon him, and if he escapes her it is only to fall a victim to a still more deadly monster, called, *Nangganangga*. This demon sits near a great, black stone, and no bachelor ever escapes him. Thus it is that no unmarried man ever enters Paradise. But even the married are not safe from danger, for though they pass these two "Gates" in safety there is a third peril awaiting them. A great giant, *The Killer of Souls*, lies in wait, and if he succeeds in slaying the ghost with his axe he eats him, and that soul is totally destroyed. Those who escape this peril come to *Naindelinde*, a peak of the Kauvandra mountains, and find that the road ends at the edge of a precipice, at whose foot is a large lake. Over this precipice projects a great steering oar whose handle is held by a servant of Ndengei, the Serpent God, who rules in the next world. The servant tells him to sit on the blade of the oar and, if he does so, tips him into

(a) G. Brown, *Melanesians and Polynesians*. pp. 192 sq.

(b) Lorimer Fison, *Tales from old Fiji*. p. 168.

(c) *Ibid.* p. 168.

T. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, I. 245 sq.

the lake, but those who are loved by Ndengei are warned by the god to sit on the handle, and so this gate keeper of Paradise cannot move the oar. They then become deified spirits and apparently enter Paradise, being free to revisit earth from time to time. Those who are cast into the lake find themselves in a kind of Underworld, called *Murimuria*, where such as deserve punishment for their sins receive it. Paradise, or *Bulotu*, for the few who achieve it, is a very pleasant place, with beautiful groves and all that man can desire. The chief qualification for admission is that you have slain and eaten your man. With the illogicality so often found among native races, many Fijians hold that some, at least, of the dead are not obliged to journey to the next world, but are reincarnated on earth. No clear reason, however, is given for this difference of fate.^(a)

In this account we can distinguish several of the chief elements found in the Hung ritual. There is a boat, although this, being a ferry boat, corresponds more closely to the boat of Charon than to the Hung boat, which represents the Solar Barque. There are clearly three dangers, or gates, to be passed, and a fourth gate or test, represented by the servant of Ndengei, which admits either into Heaven or Hell. It thus combines the Gates of the City of Willows with the action of the Red Youth beside the Fiery Furnace. It is also worth noting that the Fijians had a ceremony of initiation whose purpose appears to have been to prepare the young man for this journey, and help him to overcome the dangers which beset it, while enlisting on his behalf the good offices of departed ancestors.^(b)


(a) T. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*. I. 247.

(b) For details of these initiation rites see J. G. Frazer, *Belief in Immortality*. I. 484 sq., and J. S. M. Ward, *Who was Hiram Abiff?* p. 208 sq.

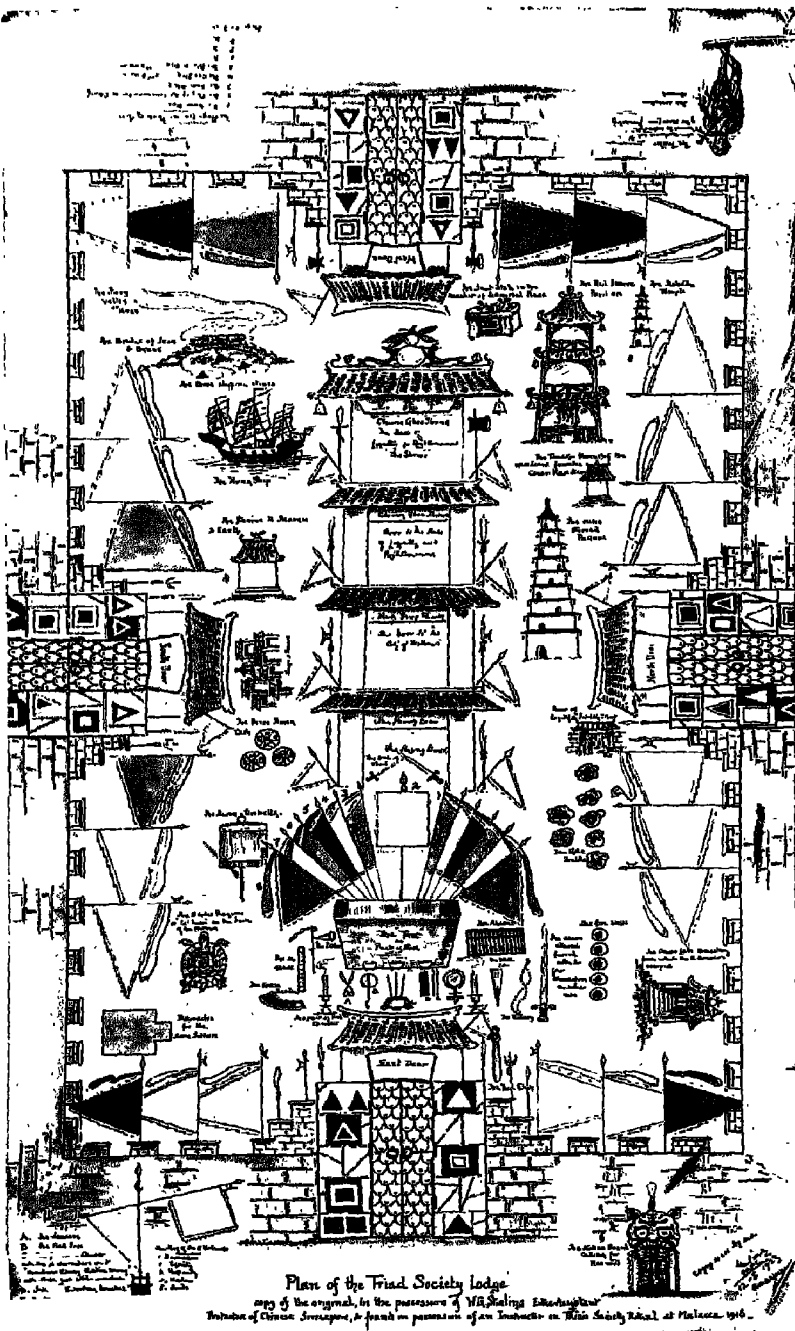


CHAPTER VIII.

BELIEFS IN OCEANIA WHICH MAY HAVE FORMED THE BASIS OF THE HUNG RITE.

EAVING Fiji, a journey due South brings us to what is now known as New Zealand. When the white man landed in that country he found a race whose culture showed an extraordinary blending of evolved intelligence and primitive customs, and it is therefore of the greatest interest to us to find that on the subject of what befalls the soul after death they had a number of very definite beliefs, some of which are in striking analogy with incidents in the Triad ceremony.

This race, the Maoris, were themselves invaders, who had come by boat from further North, and had practically obliterated the more primitive people whom they found on their arrival. The exact area from whence they came is still a matter of dispute, but it was certainly not very far from New Guinea, although it is possible that even this home was merely a temporary stopping place on a journey from a still more distant centre. It is clear, however, that it is not impossible that they were at one time in touch with New Guinea itself, and if so the features in their beliefs as to what befalls the dead which are similar to those found in New Guinea may be evidence of a definite migration of this cult from that centre. Neither can we preclude the possibility of their having come into touch with the Chinese at some period in their history anterior to the epic voyage which resulted in their conquest of New Zealand. There are, indeed, anthropologists who are inclined to think that many of the races in the Pacific must at one time have been in touch with a still more ancient civilisation than that of China, namely, Egypt, and if so they will find additional evidence for their theories in some of the beliefs held by the Maoris. But perhaps the most tangible piece of evidence on the point is the silent witness borne by two ungainly statues which were brought from Easter Island, and which now stand on the the East side of the colonnaded portico of the British Museum. On the back of each of these statues is carved in bas-relief a large ankh cross. The fact that they are in bas-relief precludes the possibility of them having been carved in by any modern forger, although the evenly weathered surface of the crosses and the backs of the figures should be sufficient to convince us that they are contemporary with the statues themselves. How such an essentially Egyptian symbol came to be marooned on this lonely island in mid-Pacific no one can say, but facts like these should make us hesitate to reject out of hand the possibility of all connection between the natives of the



A TRIAD PLAN OF THE MYSTIC JOURNEY.
as Portrayed in the Arrangement of the Lodge.

Pacific islands and Egypt. At the same time it will take many more facts to establish a definite link, although when studying a subject like this such a possibility must be borne in mind.

On the other hand, the fact that the Maoris lay emphasis on a Bridge of Dread, which is found in China and in Western Europe but not in Egypt, suggests that, whether or not they were in touch with Egyptian influence, they must also have been in contact with another set of beliefs, such as those of China, or else have evolved this detail themselves, quite independently.

Bearing these facts in mind, we will now study the beliefs of the Maoris, and of some of the other native races in the Pacific, and will find therein further evidence in support of our theory that the Triad ritual is a Mystery Rite, intended to prepare its initiates for that long journey through the darkness which each must take in due course.

THE MAORIS.

The Maoris believed that there were ten Heavens ^(a) and many regions of the Underworld, which was called *Po*, but some of these are described by them as being very pleasant places, corresponding with the Elysian Fields, although others were as direful as the Hell of the mediæval monks. Furthermore, as in the Egyptian *Tuat*, some souls suffered a second death in the Underworld, which resulted in total extinction. Just who were entitled to enter the various Heavens is uncertain, although it appears as if these were reserved for the chiefs and Priests, while apparently the most pleasant place an ordinary tribesman could hope to reach would be their Elysian Fields.

Immediately after death the soul was supposed to set out on a journey across the sea, for which purpose a small boat was often deposited in the grave of a Chief to enable him to sail to the Happy Land. The soul journeyed towards North Cape and on the way paused at a hill, named *Wai-hokisnai*, where it stripped off its clothes, wailed and gashed itself. It then continued its journey until it reached a second hill, called *Wai-otioti*. Here it once more paused and lamented its fate, until the realisation came to it that it was indeed dead and for it there was no return, then at last, setting its face finally towards the North, it sped onwards to North Cape. Beneath the cliffs at this spot there exists a cave wherein was believed to dwell an evil spirit called *Wiro*, who lay in wait for the passing souls.

Reaching the edge of the cliff the soul leapt down on to a flat rock and thence, if it escaped *Wiro*, dived into the sea and found itself in the Underworld. ^(b) Soon it came to *Wai-orotane*, the River of the Water of Life, which was spanned by a bridge. By the bridge stood a warden, and if he refused to let the soul pass him it returned to life again,¹ and even when the soul had

¹This is the Maoris explanation of how it is that a man who has fainted recovers consciousness, for they think that a man in a swoon is really dead.

(a)R. Taylor, *Te Ika A Mauri*, p. 320.

(b)J. G. Frazer, *Belief in Immortality*, II. p. 26

passed this fatal bridge if it steadily refused to eat any food in the Underworld it returned to mortal life.^(a)

In order to raise the soul out of the Underworld into Heaven, and from Heaven to Heaven, the Maoris often performed various ceremonies, one of which consisted in pulling at a cord attached to a mat on which lay the corpse.^(b) This custom reminds us of certain ceremonies which will be familiar to Masons in this country who have taken some of the higher degrees.

Such are the beliefs of the Maoris and, fragmentary though the legends are, we can trace a number of analogies with the Hung ritual. Thus the Maori dead have to pass three gates on their way to the Underworld, and at the first strip off their clothes. This reminds us at once of what happens to the candidate outside the Hung Gate, in the anteroom, where he has to strip off the robes of Ts'ing and clothe himself with the garments of Ming, whose white colour and cotton texture clearly symbolise grave-clothes. Again, *Wiro* is obviously very similar to the *Red Youth*, who stands on guard by the *Fiery Furnace*: *The River of the Water of Life* is represented in the Hung ritual by the *Water of the Three Rivers*, while the *Bridge*, with its guardian, brings to mind the *Causeway* which rose amid the flames of the burning abbey. The proviso concerning food in the Underworld recalls not only such legends as that of Persephone, but also the *Fruit Stall* in the *Market Place of Universal Peace*, for it will be remembered that immediately the Hung Heroes have crossed the River they stop and buy fruit from an old man. This incident no doubt implies that thereby they make themselves one with the other Heroes in Heaven, while the statement that the false-hearted who eat thereof perish, indicates the possibility of a second death, and even of total extinction. Lastly, we must remember the *Maori boat* buried with the dead Chief to enable him to reach the Happy Land, which clearly corresponds with the *Hung boat*, while the shadowy Heaven, to which he is helped by means of a rope, reminds us of the Heavenly City of the Triad and the rope with which Amitabha Buddha draws forth the souls from the Underworld into His blissful Paradise.

In conclusion it will be found that whereas several incidents herein are common to both China and Egypt, there are some, such as the Bridge, which while present in the Chinese account are lacking from the Egyptian, and to that extent would indicate a closer connection between China and the Maoris than between either of them and the banks of the Nile.

THE SAMOANS.

If we follow in the footsteps of the Maori soul from Cape North we shall finally arrive close to Samoa, a fact which has not been overlooked by some

E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders*. pp. 150 sq., *id.* *Maori Religion and Mythology*. p. 45.

R. Taylor *Tu Ika. A Maori*. pp. 52, 231.

J. G. Fraser, *Belief in Immortality* II. p. 28.

J. G. Fraser, *Belief in Immortality*. II. p. 25.

anthropologists, who consider that this indicates that the Maoris reached New Zealand via that island, for they say that primitive races often place their Isles of the Blest, or Paradise, in the direction of their original home. If this latter theory is correct it would indicate that the Samoans themselves have reached that island from afar, and also the direction whence they came, for they, like so many other races, believed in an Island of the Blest, which they said lay to the North West and was called *Pulotu*. Now if there be anything in the previous suggestion it would indicate that the Samoans had come from the direction of China, or at any rate that many of their beliefs had been brought thence, possibly by Chinese traders. If we study the map we shall find that to the North West of Samoa lie a string of islands, namely, Ellis Island, Gilbert Island, Nauru, the Caroline Islands, Guam and Formosa, from whence it is but a short journey to China. Even if the canoes had gone several hundred miles North or South of this line they would have found a series of stepping stones leading from China to Samoa. South of this line lies the mass of islands which group around New Guinea, while North of it are the Marshall Islands and the Ladrões. There is nothing fantastic, therefore, in a theory which would suggest that at some remote period the inhabitants, not only of Samoa but of many other Pacific Islands came into direct or indirect touch with China, and gleaned from that country the beliefs then current, and which are still represented in the ritual of the Hung Society.

The Samoans, then, believed in an Isle of the Blest, but they also speak of an Underworld. Exactly why some souls went to the Underworld and others to the Isle of the Blest is not very clear, but the most generally accepted belief was that it depended not on a good or evil life, but on aristocratic birth or priestly status, which entitled a man to enter the Island, whereas ordinary folk went to the Underworld. At death the soul made its way to the most Westerly part of the island, whence it dived into the ocean and passed into the Underworld^(a). At a place called Savaii there were two openings among the rocks close to the beach, one for Chiefs, the other for common folk, and through these openings the dead passed into the Underworld. Near to them stood a cocoanut tree which was known as *The Tree of the Watcher*, and if the departing soul ran into the tree it could go no further, but returned to its body. It was in this way that the Samoans accounted for people recovering from a swoon. The tree reminds us of the Egyptian acacia tree which stood at the entrance to the Underworld. Both the caves led to a place which the natives called *The Hollow Pit* and at the bottom thereof was a stream into which they fell, and which carried them away to *Pulotu*. Here they bathed in *The Water of Life*, whereupon old age and infirmity vanished and they were young again.

(a) W. Morner, *Tonga Islands*. II. pp. 127 sq.

J. G. Frazer, *The Belief in Immortality*. II. pp. 215 sq.

G. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 257.

Pulotu itself was divided into two regions, one a pleasant place, which no doubt corresponds with the Isles of the Blest, and the other a dreary land, called *Sa-le-Fe'e*, representing the true Underworld. This land was ruled by a King, named *Saveasiuleo*, who dwelt in the Elysian Fields and ruled over the entire domain. His shape was as follows:—His head and upper half of the body were human, but the lower half was like a fish, and stretched away into the sea. His form was thus somewhat similar to the whale of Jonah and the dragon of Hell.^{1(a)}

In this account we perceive that the souls travel through the underworld by means of a river, as do the Hung Heroes on the Waters of the Three Rivers, although in this case there is no boat. Paradise, like the Paradise of Kwan Yin, is in the West, while the Waters of Life bring to mind the Fountain in the midst of the City of Willows, at which the Vanguard said that he drank and his thirst was quenched.

South West of Samoa lie the Hervey Islands, and the reports we have of the beliefs of its inhabitants concerning the Westward flight of the soul brings to mind the poetic imagery of the cultured Greeks, rather than the crude superstitions of a race of savages.

HERVEY, OR COOK ISLANDS.

At death the souls went to the seashore and twined a certain red creeper round their heads^(b), thereby reminding us of the red turban worn by the Hung Heroes. At the Summer Solstice the rallying point was Ana-Hura, "The Red Cave," so called because the red beams of the Sun at dawn fell directly into the mouth of the cave.² This was the chief rendezvous, but there was another for those who wished to start at the Winter Solstice, at a place called *Karanga-iti*, *The Little Welcome*. When the fatal day arrived, the leader of the band gathered the ghosts together at the appointed spot, and all watched for the sun to rise. As soon as it did they flew to meet it and then followed behind it all day to its setting.³ They rallied for a second time towards sunset at the *Sacred Stream of Rongo* and then, as the sun set, the ghosts followed it across the golden path of light which rested on the sea, and vanished over the edge of the world. Here they found a tree growing and perched on its boughs. The tree then sunk down into *Avaiiki*, the Underworld. As it descended they saw a huge net spread over a lake for them

¹Note that in the Hung Society the names of the Candidates are written on a board, on which is painted the head of a tiger. These names are carefully placed inside the "mouth" of the Tiger, which may imply that the initiates are swallowed by the monster.

²Note the stress laid on the colour *red* by the Hervey Islanders, and compare with the similar veneration for that colour in the Hung Ritual.

³Herein we see the same idea as occurs in the Egyptian tradition of the Solar Barque and in the Hung Boat.

^a*Ibid.* p. 258 sq.

^bW. W. Gill, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*. p. 155 sq.

by *Akaanga* and his assistants. Into this the spirits fell and were drawn forth captives. They were then led before a grim hag, *Miru*, named the *Ruddy* because the glare of her oven fell on her face. She fattened up the ghosts with choice food, which was given them by her four beautiful daughters, who finally made each ghost drunk with Kava. While in this state they were slain, cooked in the oven and eaten by the hag. This was the fate of all save those who died in battle.

In this account we can trace several analogies with certain incidents in the Hung ritual. The "red hag" corresponds with the "red youth," and her oven with his furnace, while the exclusion of warriors reminds us of the fact that the Hung Heroes are essentially fighting men. The fate of warriors was much better if they fell in battle, for, like the Norse, they entered the City of the Gods. They, too, made their way to the sunset, but instead of a tree a mountain suddenly rose before them. This they ascended by means of the spears and swords which had caused their deaths. On reaching the top they leapt into the air, and to men on earth seemed like clouds. It was not until August, when the coral trees burst into scarlet blossom, that the warrior ghosts finally ascended into Heaven, as the clouds gradually vanished from the sky. These souls henceforth lived for ever with the gods.

The striking similarity between this and the Mystical Journey taken by a Hung Hero, who, be it remembered, was supposed to be a warrior, will be shown best by quoting the opening section of the Vanguard's catechism.

Master— (To Vanguard) Whence come you ?

Vanguard— (For Candidate) From the East.

Master— At what time ?

Vanguard— At sunrise, when the East was light.

Master— Why at that particular hour ?

Vanguard— As I was roaming over the mountains the sun was still hidden from sight,

But the heart of man on earth turns towards the East.

When the cocks crew at dawn I wished to help my native land,

The bright pearl rose and reddened the earth for miles around.

Master— What abilities do you possess ?

Vanguard— I am acquainted with the military arts.

Master— From what place do you come ?

Vanguard— From the Red Flower Pavilion, where the Master of Hung instructed me.

It is interesting to study the above from the point of view set forth in the story told by the Hervey Islanders. The leader of the band gathered the ghosts together even as does the Vanguard, who at the very beginning of the ceremony

says that he has been out gathering recruits. At sunrise they flew towards the sun and followed it towards the West, thus they could have given exactly the opening answers of the Vanguard. Further, until the allotted day the Hervey Island ghosts wandered over mountains and valleys in the island, waiting for the sun to rise at the Summer or Winter Solstice, and it might be truly said of them that the heart of man on earth, i.e., the disembodied ghost, turns towards the East. When the cock crew on that day was the time for their departure, and as the sun rose it reddened the spot on earth where they were standing, namely, *The Red Cave*. But we have seen that only the warriors could hope for a happy ending to this journey, for they alone could reach Heaven, hence the question asked by the Master, "What abilities do you possess?" might well have been put by the Gods in Heaven to a Hervey warrior who had accomplished the journey, while the Vanguard's answer, which proved he *was* a warrior, would have been an adequate reply. When the Hung Master asked him whence he had come the Vanguard replied, "From the Red Flower Pavilion." What more appropriate name could we find for the *Red Cave* of the Hervey Islanders where all the ghosts were decked with red blossoms, the more so as the warriors themselves could not enter Heaven until the coral trees had burst into scarlet bloom?¹ Even the further reply, "Where the Master of Hung instructed me" might well refer to the leader of the band, who gathered them together there and instructed them as to the final steps to be taken on their departure. Lastly, in the Black Dragon Mountain of the Hung we have the exact counterpart of the mountain up which the Hervey warriors ascended to Heaven, while the swords and axes whereby the latter climbed may be remembered in those which adorned the walls of the City of Willows.

If we now turn north-west again towards Micronesia, we shall find records among some of the islanders of beliefs which are of special interest to us, as some of them, at any rate, seem to suggest a kind of initiatory rite, with symbolic journeys and other curious incidents which we have found established among more advanced races. In particular we shall perceive vestiges of a kind of three-fold path and a three-fold Heaven, curiously reminiscent both of the New Guinea beliefs and of incidents in the journey taken by a Hung Hero. As the Gilbert Islands are directly in the path which would connect Samoa and the Hervey Islands with China, we will consider them first, and then briefly glance at the beliefs once current in the Marshall islands, which mark another stepping-stone in the same direction. Finally, we will conclude our study of the beliefs once prevalent among the Pacific Islanders by an account of those held by the natives of Mortlock Island and Ponape, and in the latter will find some amazing parallels with the main incidents in the Triad ritual, such as the *Bridge*, the *Fiery Ditch*, and the *Walled City*.

¹Note once again the sacred colour, red.

THE GILBERT ISLANDS.

According to these people the soul wailed for three days near the corpse and then set out Eastward. It came to the place where the god, *Tabakca*, dwelt, who told it to go South. This it did until it reached a place where dwelt the goddess, *Jituaa-bine*, who sent it due North to Boura, where dwelt *Nakaa*, which was near Matang or Paradise. Its journey thus formed a Tau Cross. Going North the soul passed over sea and land until in mid-ocean it was met by a terrible hag, called, *Kara-ma-kuna*, who was the daughter of *Nakaa*. This being scraped off the tattoo marks which are always borne by these people, ate them as a *passing fee*, and then said:—

"Pass from Manra, the land of the living, to Boura, the land of the dead." She next touched the eyes of the soul, which immediately saw with *spirit eyes* and the way seemed no longer dark. Now the soul moved towards the North-west till it came to *Nakaa*, who was the guardian of the gate of Boura. *Nakaa* seized the soul and probed its heart, to discover whether it had committed incest or theft, or was a coward; if it failed to pass this test, it was flung into a place of torment, called *Te Kai-ni-kakeka*. If it passed the test, it had to remain for three days in a village at the gate of Boura. This was to compensate for the three days it had wasted wailing beside its corpse. It was then permitted to enter paradise. Apparently there were three possible places in which it could dwell; Matang, Marira and Boura, ^(a) but wherein they differed is not clear.

In this account we note the journey of the soul traces out a tau cross, and so is very similar to that taken by Yudishthira as related in some versions of the Hindu legend, while the testing at the gate reminds us of the Red Youth in the Hung ritual. The three points of the compass at which the soul receives directions represent the same principle as do the three gates in the Triad ceremony, and the gate of Boura, at which the final trial takes place, corresponds with the gate of the City of Willows. While there is neither boat nor bridge, the old hag who meets the soul on its journey across the ocean seems to correspond with the old woman who meets evil souls on the Parsee bridge. It will be noted that Paradise is in the North-west, but some of the natives place it in the West. In any case, however, it is in a Westerly direction in these islands.¹

THE MARSHALL ISLANDS.

Amongst these people the soul was believed to journey West and to appear at the Isle of the Blest in the shape of a canoe. If the canoe was a large one, it survived and became immortal, but if it was small it was unable to surmount

¹As the Chinese Isle of the Blest is in the West the large number of cases in which the Soul has to travel West is of interest, but there are legends in which the next world is envisaged as lying in some other direction.

(a) A. Grimble, *From Birth to death in the Gilbert Islands*, Journal of the R. Anth. Inst. (1921) pp. 49 sq.

the wall which surrounded the island and therefore perished.^(a) The fact that the soul becomes a ship instead of merely travelling by one is a curious variation, and unfortunately we are not told what caused some souls to appear as big canoes and so achieve immortality, but it is possible that they varied in direct ratio with the earthly importance of the individual. The analogy with the Hung Boat is obvious.

MORTLOCK ISLANDS.

These islanders said that the good souls, assisted by the God, *Olaitin*, ascended a ladder which led to Heaven, passed between two stones which served as the gates of Heaven, opening and shutting alternatively by crashing together and then separating, and finally entered into bliss. The souls of the wicked, however, were seized by the god, *Olofat*, and cast into a pit called the *Sea of Filth*,^(b) but Warriors went to a special heaven presided over by the War God, *Rasin*.^(c) Thus there were three places to which the souls could go and three roads by which they could pass, which remind us of the three roads in the Hung ritual. The ladder here replaces the bridge and recalls the ladder in certain Masonic degrees, and that which appears in the fresco at Chaldon.

THE PONAPEANS.

Perhaps the most interesting tradition of all was that held by the people of Ponape. They believed that under the sea lay two regions. One a dismal place of suffering, called, *Pueliko*, and the other a kind of Elysian Fields, named, *Pajit*. To reach the latter the soul had to cross the former by means of a bridge, called *The Dancing Bridge*, on which stood fiends who hurled him from it into the place of woe. In order to pass these guardians the soul had to perform a kind of ritual dance, which, if well done, absorbed the attention of the fiends until he had passed them in safety.^(d) According to another account, their Paradise was surrounded by a wall, round which ran a bottomless ditch. The only gate was guarded by an old hag and the soul had to jump the ditch and wrestle with the old hag, who tried to throw him into it. If he overthrew her, he entered Paradise, but if she threw him into the ditch he remained there in misery for ever.^(e) A third account says that there were two female guardians of this ditch, one of whom held a sword¹ and the other a torch.^(f)

¹Compare this with the torch and sword in the ritual of the *Three Dots Society*. See Vol. I., pp. 178 sq.

(a) A. Sadland, *Die Marshall-Insulaner*. pp. 328 sq.

J. G. Frazer, *Belief in Immortality*. II. pp. 86-87.

(b) J. G. Frazer, *Belief in Immortality*. II. pp. 118 sq.

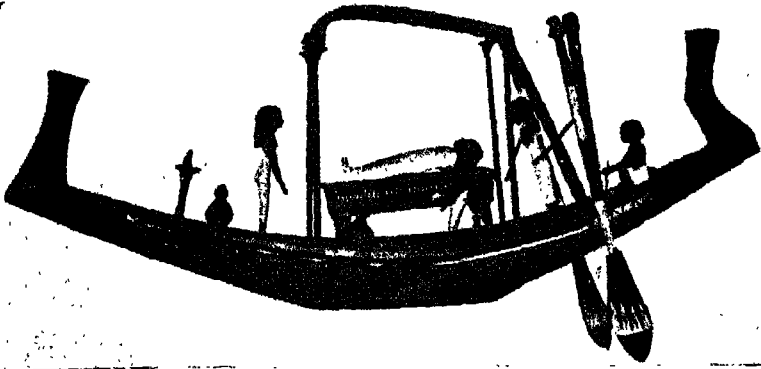
(c) Dr. Hahl, *Mitteilungen über Sitten und rechtliche Verhältnisse auf Ponape*. Ethnologisches Notizblatt II. 2. p. 4.

(d) A. Cheyne, *A Description of the Islands in the Western Pacific*, p. 121.

(e) F. W. Christian, *The Caroline Islands*. p. 75.



THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, BALE.



AN EGYPTIAN MODEL OF A BOAT TO BEAR THE SOUL.

In the first account we have a striking analogy with the Bridge of the Triad Ritual, although in some ways it more closely resembles the bridge Sir Owayne had to cross in his journey through St. Patrick's Purgatory. The ditch which had to be jumped reminds us at once of the "Fiery Ditch" in the Hung ceremony, while the two women bring to mind the pairs of generals, armed with swords, whom the Hung candidates have to pass, or more particularly the Red Youth and the beautiful Princess who stands near the bridge. The version which gives only one old hag as guardian of the way reminds us of the Parsee account, wherein an old hag stands on the bridge and flings evil doers into Hell. It should be noted that the Ponapeans do not seem to have evolved to a state wherein they considered moral rectitude to be the necessary qualification for admission to Paradise. Among them a magical ritual dance, or great *strength*, enabled the souls to reach the desired goal. The apparent divergencies between the three accounts probably indicate different stages in the journey, but in any case it is clear that the ditch is the same as *Pueliko*.



A MAORI GIRL.

CHAPTER IX.

AMERICAN LEGENDS OF THE JOURNEY OF THE SOUL.



EXISTING the temptation to turn Westward and explore the beliefs of the more civilised races of the ancient world, let us continue East, across the Pacific, to the Continent of the two Americas, and see whether we cannot discover among the beliefs and legends of the Red Indians points which will help us in our investigation. By adopting this route in our imaginary journey around the world we shall have the advantage of being able to see, as it were, the historical order of the evolution of men's thoughts on the subject of the world beyond the grave. We started with one of the most primitive races, the Australian Bushmen, whose culture has hardly reached that of Neolithic man in Europe, and the Pacific Islanders, though somewhat more advanced, had not learnt to use metals when they were discovered by the white races. In like manner the Red Skins used stone axes and arrow heads when first the Pale Faces came into contact with them, and therefore their beliefs represent those of a fairly primitive people, although, intellectually, as subsequent events proved, the Red Skin is much superior to the Australian Black Boy.

In this chapter, instead of relying upon the reports of missionaries or other white men who have talked with the natives, we will, so far as possible, utilise the legends of the Red Skins, and from them learn the early beliefs of these people on our subject. In adopting this method we shall probably get a truer perception of their real beliefs, while the heroes themselves will approximate very closely to the candidate in the Hung ceremony. It is, indeed, possible that these legends are really the Traditional History of some of the Indian Initiation Rites, although we may not be able to state this as a definite fact. Undoubtedly, however, some of the heroes symbolically represent every Indian warrior and in the legend tread the same path as the Red Skin will have to follow after death.

THE LAST JOURNEY.^(a)

A warrior received a summons from the Great Spirit to come to the Happy Hunting Grounds and when his wife and his two children learnt of the fact they declared that they would follow him thither. So he set out Westward, singing the death chant, whose responses were taken up by the others, who followed behind him in Indian file. After a while the youngest boy grew weary and

^(a)M. C. Judd, *Wigwam Stories*. p. 257.

hid among some bushes. When the others were out of sight he quietly slipped back home again and went to sleep. A little later the elder son noticed that his brother was missing and went back, saying that he would look after him. Now only the father, his wife and his dog were left, but the warrior never looked back.¹

Presently, having travelled a little farther, his wife called out, "I will not forsake you, I will follow you to the Gates of the Happy Hunting Ground." Nevertheless, as the trail became rougher and more stony she began to falter. The cactus and the thorn bushes tore their clothes, and even their flesh, and at length his wife cried, "Let us rest," and, so saying, fell on her face. But the warrior went on undismayed, and when she rose again he was out of sight, so she decided to return to her children, salving her conscience by telling herself that when she had found her children she would return and seek her husband.

On, on, the warrior went and as the *darkness* closed upon him he felt the nose of his faithful dog pressed against his legs,—and it comforted him. A new day dawned, and still ever Westward went the pair, and so for several more long days and nights, until at length he saw two great rocks, which were the pillars of the Gateway of the Happy Hunting Grounds. As he reached the Gates he cried out, "I am here," and the Watchman opened the Gates and said, "Where are those who set forth with you?"

The warrior replied, "The trail was long and their feet grew weary." But the Watchman pointed to the dog and said, "Who is this weary one who has, nevertheless, followed you hither?"

"This is he who loved me best," replied the weary traveller, and at his words the Watchman laid his hand upon the dog's head and said, "Enter, both of you, into the Land of Rest."

In this legend we have a series of remarkable parallels with what actually befalls the candidate in the Hung Society. The Hung Master sends him a summons to attend the Lodge, and is therein the humble representative of the great Manitou, or God, Who, as described in the mediæval mystery play of *Everyman*, sooner or later summons each of his children to appear before Him in a far land. The candidate sets out on a long journey before he ever sees the Lodge, ultimately reaching the preparing room. He then has to pass through the gate leading to the Temple, which in the Indian story is represented by the place at which the young boy turned aside, even as at this very point every Hung candidate is theoretically given an opportunity of likewise turning back. Having entered the Temple the candidate reaches the Hung Gate, which is represented in the Indian story by the point at which the elder son turns back, and here we are struck by the fact that just as there are three individuals who pass the Hung Gate at a time, namely, the Vanguard and two candidates, so

¹We are specifically told in the Hindu legend of Yudishthira that as his wife and brothers fell by the way the hero never looked back, and in like manner he was accompanied to the end by a dog.

THE HUNG SOCIETY.

in the Indian story there still remain the warrior, the dog and the wife. The next gate in the Hung ritual is called the *Gate of the Hall of Loyalty and Patriotism*, which is represented in the Indian story by the place where the wife turns back. In other words, her loyalty was not sufficiently strong to enable her to pass. Finally, the Gate of the City of Willows corresponds with the Gates of the Indian Paradise, and it is certainly significant that just as the Hung candidates pass that gate in pairs, in like manner two individuals, the dog and the man, enter the Happy Hunting Grounds together.

Although this story contains no very clear conception of an Underworld, no doubt it is traceable in the darkness through which the warrior had to pass. The only other important incidents which are missing are the Bridge and the Hung boat, but it should be clearly understood that the Warrior in the story reaches only Paradise, for the Indian's Heaven is in the sky. May be he would use both the Bridge and the Boat were the story continued until he reached the High Heavens, for there are good arguments which can be adduced in support of the view that the candidate in the Hung ritual does not enter the Boat until he has left Paradise.

In conclusion the story should be studied in connection with the Hindu legend of the journey of Yudishthira. The devotion of a dog to its master is proverbial all the world over, and, not unjustly, it has become the symbol of loyalty to duty. Hence in the more evolved tale of Yudishthira the dog avowedly stands for duty itself.^(a)

THE WARRIOR WHO SOUGHT HIS WIFE.

The Chippewa Indians^(b) relate how a certain young brave lost his wife by death and determined to seek her in the Land of Shadows, so he set out with his dog and journeyed South. It was winter when he started, but in due course he came to a fair, smiling field, where all was sunshine. Here the old path faded away, but seeing a new one, carpeted with flowers, he followed it. This led through a small wood, up a long range of hills and ended at a wigwam, at the door of which stood an old Chief with snow-white hair and bright eyes, who held a staff in his hand.

The old Chief welcomed him and told him that his wife had rested within and that it was only three days since she had left him. He then made the warrior rest for awhile, after which he led him to the door of the wigwam and pointed over the landscape, saying, "Yonder is the Land of Souls, but you must leave your body, your weapons and your dog with me, for only your soul can enter that land." The warrior obeyed, and leaving his dog to guard his body seemed to fly through the air. The objects he saw did not lose their colour but became even brighter, yet he found he could pass through them, for

(a) See p. 107.

(b) M. C. Judd, *Wigwam Stories*, p. 151.

they were the souls of things and not their bodies. So on he came to a great lake, in the centre of which there was a beautiful green island. On the shore he found a white stone canoe into which he stepped, and as he took up the paddle he saw his dead wife standing beside him, in a similar stone canoe. They crossed the lake in these, which floated lightly over the waves, and sat down on the Isle of Rest. Here they talked and forgot their past sorrows, till the warrior heard the voice of the great Manitou like a soft zephyr whisper, "Now you must return to the land of the Chippewas and teach them, but your wife will await you in the Isles of Rest."

Then the warrior awoke as if from a dream and found himself in the wigwam of the old Chief. His dog was waiting by his side and, remembering the words of the great Manitou, he set out to his own people. There he taught them many things, more especially concerning his journey to the Isle of Rest, and when he died his tribe gave him a great name, for he had taught them well and wisely.

This is almost the only example of a journey to the other world which is not in the West. The idea underlying it is that in the South lies the land of Eternal Sunshine. Probably we have here, but under pleasanter conditions, the three stages met with in the last story; (a) the meadow, (b) the wood, (c) the hills, and lastly the Gateway into Paradise. The old man clearly corresponds with the Watcher at the Gate in the other story, while his staff reminds us of the caduceus of Hermes, the Conductor of the Dead in Greek Mythology. The three days constantly occur in stories dealing with what befalls man after death. The island clearly corresponds with the Isle of the Blest in the Hung ritual, and the description should be compared with the Isle of Truth in the Egyptian Tuat. The stone canoe seems here, not to represent the Hung Boat, but to correspond more to a ferry, which replaces a bridge, for the journey is obviously a short one and not a long voyage like that taken by the Hung Heroes. On the other hand, it leads to an island as does the Hung boat, and not to a City as does the bridge in the Triad ritual.

The story, of course, is that of a primitive race, and therefore it is not surprising to find that there is no city. The canoe is clearly a magic boat, since it is made of stone. It corresponds most closely with the Ferry boat which conveys souls from the Elysian Fields to the Isle of Truth in the Tuat. The Elysian Fields being here represented by the beautiful country over which the warrior flew before he reached the lake. The Great Manitou, or Great Spirit, is God, the Supreme Being, Whom the Indians clearly distinguish from the lesser Spirits, or Manitous, who correspond to the demi-gods or angels. The legend itself has many points of interest. It seems to mark a half way stage in the development of the story of the journey of the soul after death, also it bears a distinct resemblance to the journey of Orpheus in search of his wife and tells of a living man who, like Yoonecara, travelled to the land of the Shades and returned once more to mortal men.

THE HUNG SOCIETY.

HOW MAN CAME FORTH FROM THE UNDERWORLD.

A Zuni Tale.

In both the previous stories we notice that the Indians do not envisage a dark Underworld as forming any part of the conditions of life after death. In the following story, however, there appears to be some trace of this idea, for although it purports to relate the creation of the visible world, it probably originally described the descent of two Gods into the Underworld and the bringing forth into day of the souls therein.

According to F. H. Cushing,^(a) the Zuni, who live in a veritable city made of clay huts, covering 15 acres, in New Mexico, chant a song in which they tell how men came out from the bowels of the earth on to its surface. This legend relates that originally men lived in a cave deep down in the earth, which was overcrowded, where there was no light and consequently where the people were very miserable. The Sun god pitied their misery and sent his two children to lead them from the first cave into another, which was exactly above it. After a time they led them into a second cave, which was a little larger but still dark, and then into a third, a good deal bigger, where there was a faint twilight. At length, when their numbers had increased and the children of the sun thought that they could bear the light of day, they led them out from this third cave into a fourth, and on to the surface of the earth. They there found themselves on a small island surrounded by sea, and in order to make room for the people the children of the sun drove back and dried up most of the sea, so that man can now travel over vast areas of the earth.

With regard to this legend it should be noted that it belongs not to the nomad tribes of North America but to a semi-civilised race, akin to the still more civilised Indians of Central America, who had definitely evolved the conception of an Underworld. In my opinion it has become distorted and diverted from its meaning. Originally it was a tradition of the sun at dawn and sunset, which were, symbolically, the children of the sun. These unite in the dark to go through the Underworld, and with them take the souls of men through the Underworld and out into the Celestial country which lies behind the Mountains of the Dawn.

The three lower caves in which the people sojourned are the three regions of the Underworld,—the three Gates of the Hung ritual. The fourth cave, in which they did not stay, is the Gate into Paradise; the gate of the City of Willows. The island itself is Paradise, and the process by which the sea was dried up is a distorted memory of a bridge, the Rainbow bridge, created by the children of the Sun to enable the souls in Paradise to cross the waters which divided them from the true Heavens. This fact is proved by the method they employed to dry up the waters. They placed the magic shield, which was the disc of the sun, upon the earth, and across it laid their *Rainbow Bow* (so named

^(a)F. H. Cushing, *Zuni Folk Tales*.

in the story). From it they fired arrows made of lightning to the four quarters of the sky, and these caused a storm of fire which dried up the water.

Viewed in this light the legend becomes perfectly intelligible, and corresponds very closely with the tradition found in the Hung ritual and in the numerous other legends which describe the souls as travelling with the sun. The arrangement of the caves one over the other is easily explained by the fact that the Zuni live in mud houses several stories high, each story being inhabited by a different family, very much as is the case in a modern block of flats.

THE BOAT OF THE SOUL.

As showing that the belief in the Boat of the Soul is still prevalent among the tribes of Red Skins who have not yet been converted to Christianity, it is worth mentioning that in a lecture broadcasted by Mr. Hedges on November 8th, 1925, and reported in the *Daily Chronicle* on the following day, he related how he came across a tribe of Indians in Central America who believed that at death the soul journeyed to the nearest river, where it found a spirit canoe manned by spirit messengers. It entered into this canoe and was paddled a considerable distance along the river, until it reached a spot where the river divided into several streams. At this point it was met by a Manitou, who told the helmsman which path it was to follow and by that path it reached the realms of bliss. The survival of such beliefs into the 20th century is of interest to us in our research.

These three stories must suffice for our purpose, for although it would be possible to incorporate others from South America, or to discuss the beliefs of the ancient Aztecs and Incas, it is not really necessary for our enquiry. We have shown that the main landmarks in the Hung ritual are found in the primitive beliefs of Australia, Oceania and America, and can now, therefore, continue our journey Eastward to Africa, where we shall find other primitive races whose beliefs and customs may help us to solve our problem.



CHAPTER X.

AFRICAN INITIATION RITES WHICH DEAL WITH THE JOURNEY OF THE SOUL.

THE BOLOKI.



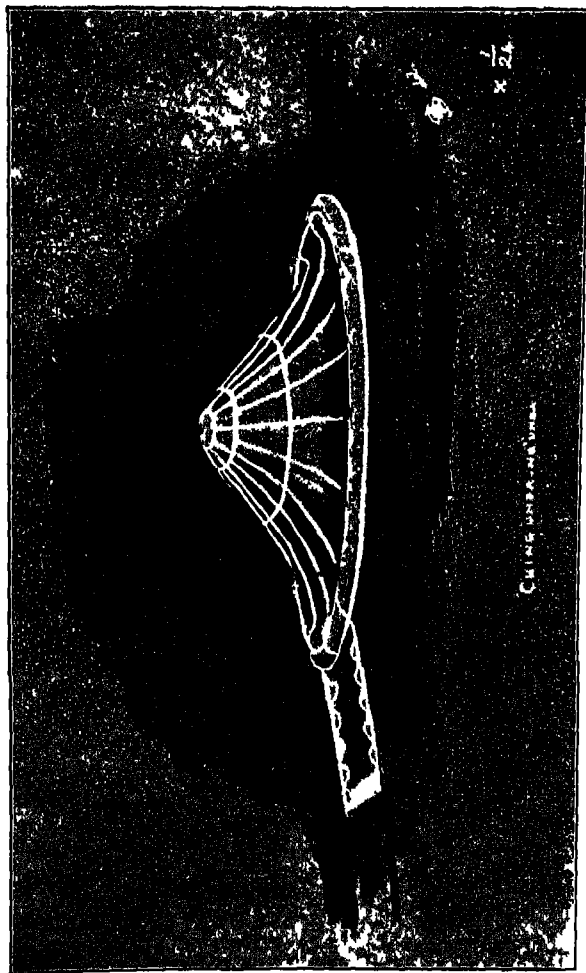
THE Boloki^(a) of the Upper Congo call the soul of a living man, *Elimo*, and believe that a man's shadow, or reflection, both of which are called, *Elilingi*, is a vital part of him. They say that a "dead person casts no shadow," and if for any reason a man cannot see his shadow, or reflection, during the daytime he thinks someone has stolen it and that he will die unless he can obtain a charm from the medicine man which will bring it back. This is another example of the wide-spread belief to which we referred in volume I.^(b) that if a man's shadow or reflection is damaged he will die, advantage of which belief is taken in the Hung ritual, where the mirror and the foot rule are used to secure control of these parts of a man's personality as hostages for his good conduct.

When a man dies his *Elimo* becomes a disembodied ghost, called *Mongoli*, which goes to the Underworld, called *Longa*. If it has been good during life it is allowed to remain there, but if wicked it is punished, after which it is driven out of the Underworld, and goes to live in the Bush or, if formerly a member of a river tribe, it haunts the rivers and creeks. In either case it is distinctly malignant and unless propitiated by gifts of food will try to prevent living men from being successful when hunting. Certain Witch Doctors claim to be able to see the ghosts, and there are men, who are supposed to be mediums, through whom the *Mongoli* can speak. Sometimes the *Mongoli* is said to enter the body of a hippopotamus or crocodile, but usually it appears in the form a man. If the natives wish to prevent a *Mongoli* from travelling along a certain path they put stems of *Monkey pepper* across it, and the *Mongoli* cannot cross them. This idea may be the origin of the instructions given to the Hung initiate that if he sees two or three sticks on his path he must not step over them but must push them aside with his foot. From such a belief a method of recognition might easily evolve.

One of the duties of the *Mongoli* is to supply certain places in the forests or creeks with the spirits which are to enter unborn children. These spirits of unborn children are called, *Binghongbo*. They are supposed to crowd the pools

(a) J. H. Weeks, *Among Congo Cannibals*.

(b) See Volume I, Ch. XIV.



SACRED MOUNTAIN IN THE YAO RITES

in the forests, the creeks and the river banks, and every family has its own special preserve, called, *Liboma*, where the spirits are waiting for bodies in which to appear as babies.^(a) At the funeral the relatives fire guns "to ensure him a good entrance into the nether world. The departed spirits in the nether world, hearing the firing, gather about the entrance to welcome the new arrival^(b). . . Some say that the deceased hovers near the entrance (others say near the grave) while they dig the grave," and it is not until the guns have been fired that the deceased enters the Underworld and is welcomed by the other spirits.

We thus see that there is a remarkable correspondence between the beliefs of the Boloki of the Upper Congo and those of the people of New Guinea¹ and as their stage of culture is also very similar we have here an example of similar beliefs between which no direct connection can be traced and which, therefore, are probably due to the natural process of evolution. Unfortunately the Rev. J. H. Weeks does not give us as complete an account as does Prof. Malinowski, but this may partly be due to the gradual decay of native beliefs consequent on their intercourse with the white races. We have, however, the following points of similarity:—

(1). The deceased has to announce his presence at the gates of the Underworld by a noise, here made by his relations, and not by himself, as with the New Guinea natives.

(2). The spirits come to meet him as he enters, as was the case in New Guinea.

(3). He then enters the Underworld and is judged.

(4). If he passes this ordeal he is allowed to remain for some time in the Underworld.

(5). If evil he is thrust forth, as were the rejected in New Guinea, who were supposed to pass into a mythical fish. Among the Boloki a hippopotamus or a crocodile replaces the fish, but both are water creatures.

(6). The spirits superintend the placing of the spirits of the unborn in suitable localities where they may enter flesh. The fact that they hide them in, or near, water, as in New Guinea, is very significant.

Unfortunately we have no account of the judge in this Underworld nor of the punishments he inflicts on the wicked before expelling them, neither is there any mention of the roads through it, the three villages therein, or life there. In view of the similarity of beliefs, however, we shall probably not be far wrong if we assume that life in the Boloki Underworld is very like that of the New Guinea native. Furthermore, although we have no definite state-

¹They even have a cult of skulls and are cannibals, as is the case in New Guinea. See *Ibid.*, pp. 69 and 328.

(a) J. H. Weeks, *Among Congo Cannibals*, p. 273.

(b) *Ibid.*, p. 321.

ment that the Boloki dead journey to the Underworld in a boat, we find that in many cases their coffins are made from old canoes, which indicates that this belief was at one time held in the Congo, even if it had died out by the time that the Rev. J. H. Weeks visited it.

One point is important and perfectly clear, namely, that the dead went to the Underworld, and there is thus a distinct difference between the beliefs of the Boloki of the Upper Congo and those of the Bakonga of the Lower Congo, where some of the natives believed that the deceased went to a spirit town in the forest. As however, some thought that this town was Underground this apparent difference may be merely local variants, depending on tribal taste and geographical position.

THE BAKONGA.

Among the Bakonga the dead went to a great spirit town in the forest, but the very good went to the Moon, and the very bad to the Sun, where they were tormented by the heat. Some evil souls took refuge in shooting stars and in consequence such stars were greatly dreaded. The beliefs of the Bakonga appear to be more nebulous than those of New Guinea or even those of the Boloki, who seem to occupy a middle position between these two races. The general impression one gains from studying the beliefs of the Congo natives is that originally they were very similar to those of New Guinea, but that either our information is defective or else that the beliefs were in the process of decay. In spite of this they are of real value to us in this study since among these races there existed great secret societies, in whose ritual men pretended to slay the initiates, to take them to the Spirit World, and then to bring them back again, therein being in marked analogy with the Hung ritual.

The Spirit Town in the forest would therefore correspond with the dark and somewhat dreary Underworld of the ancient Greeks, Romans and Northmen, to which ordinary folk, not distinguished by special bravery or other virtues, had to go. We cannot doubt that the Ndembo Lodge, hidden in the depth of the forest, is a symbolical representation of this Spirit Town, and that while here the initiates go through a dramatic representation of the journey supposed to be made by the spirits after death. We are not left altogether in the dark as to the nature of this journey, for fuller details are found among the kindred race of the Bushongo.

A BUSHONGO RITE.

These people who inhabit the Belgian Congo had a most interesting ceremony. The supreme chief, who bore the title of God on earth (Chembe Lunji)^(a), at intervals sent the boys who had reached puberty into the jungle to be initiated. For several nights during the dark hours the initiated men

(E. Torday et S. A. Joyce, *Les Bushongo* (Brussels, 1910). pp. 53 & 82 sq.

marched round the camp where they were, whirling bull-roarers, which noise the boys thought was the roaring of ghosts. After a month the first "point" took place. The men dug a trench 10 feet deep and roofed it over with sticks and earth, thus forming a tunnel of considerable length. At intervals four niches were cut in the walls of this tunnel in which men, suitably disguised, were stationed.

The first was draped in a leopard skin, the second as a warrior, with a knife in his hand, the third represented a smith, with a furnace and red hot irons, and the last wore an ape's mask and held a knife. These beings threatened and terrified the candidates as they made their way through the dark tunnel and out on the further side.

So far we see that the boys have been carried off into the jungle and hear the howling of ghosts. This means that the uninitiated think that they have been carried off and slain by the ghosts. The tunnel clearly represents the journey through the underworld, or Hades and the passing of four gates therein, which are properly guarded.

In this example we have the four gates with their guardians, just as in the Triad ceremony there is the door of the Temple, guarded by the Red Staff, and the three gates inside, guarded by armed Generals. The tunnel clearly represents the Underworld and with these facts before us we can have little doubt as to the nature of the journey to the Spirit Land as taught in a Ndembo Lodge and similar Secret Societies, which we will now consider, although unfortunately, Mr. Weeks ^(a) is unable to give us the detailed information we should have liked. Despite this serious omission, it seems desirable to learn what we *can* concerning one or two of the Congo Secret Societies which deal with this theme, since, after all, the Hung is a somewhat similar Secret Society and also deals with the journey of the soul.

SECRET RITES OF THE CONGO.

There are two distinct groups of ceremonies; (a) the initiatory rites of a boy, or girl and (b) secret societies which are joined by adults later in life. This second group, (b), marks a distinct development, and, although they were no doubt originally offshoots of the primitive initiatory rites of adolescence, they are nearer to the Ancient Mysteries and Modern Freemasonry than are the *Boyhood Rites*, and therefore may be regarded as a link between the latter and such organisations as the Hung Society and Freemasonry.

The Triad Society, unlike Masonry, has little Guild influence in it, and is less modernised. In China the guilds still exist as part of the trade organisations, quite distinct from the Triad Society, just as in mediæval Europe the Guilds, including the Masons' Guilds, were distinct from the Comacine Masons. We must be prepared to distinguish at least two offshoots of the

(a) *Among the Primitive Bakonga*. pp. 172 sq.

primitive rites of adolescence, and it is because we find in the Congo two distinct groups of societies, forming the intermediate link in the development of the Mystery Rites, that the information is important.

Briefly, in general, we may distinguish the following groups:—(a) Trade guilds: (b) Mixed rites admitting men and women, such as those of Eleusis and the Hung Society: and (c), Mystical Rites restricted to men, such as Mithraism. In the Congo we have representatives of (a) the Boyhood Rites, which include circumcision, (b) a male guild, with semi-trade objects, called *Nkimba*, (c) a mixed rite, *The Ndembo Society*.

In all primitive races the boys have to pass through certain initiatory rites to fit them for manhood. These usually include circumcision, instruction in sexual matters and rules and restrictions on their conduct. The initiate is likewise taught the traditions of the tribe, his duty to his superiors and, finally, that he must die, but that death does not end all. In brief, such rites teach of birth, life and death. Girls have somewhat similar ceremonies with a like object. Both these sets of initiatory rites are still working in many parts of the Congo, Nyasaland, and West Africa. A large part of the ceremonies are magical in nature and although much of the instruction may at first sight appear to us to be rubbish, we can discern valuable teaching, often of a distinctly spiritual nature.

In the Congo at puberty the boys have to go to a special Lodge, called *Vela*, which is built for the purpose, usually on an exposed hill near to a stream, about midway between several villages. When all is ready the boys are received by the *Doctor*, who is a recognised member of the *Eseka*, or *Lubwiku*, Order. The time of the ceremony is between May and October, which is the cool season in the Congo.

Unfortunately, from the account given by Mr. Weeks, it is clear that he never saw the ceremonies in full, therein differing from Major Sanderson, whose account of the Yao Rites in Nyasaland shows that the ceremonies there include a dramatic representation of death and of the journey of the soul beyond the grave. There is little doubt that similar ceremonies take place in the Congo, but we cannot say of what they consist. To us, however, it is of less importance since later in the book we shall be able to study the Yao ceremonies. Our mention of them here is that we may emphatically distinguish them from the ceremonies enacted at an initiation into the two great adult Societies.

THE SECRET LANGUAGE OF THE NKIMBA GUILDS.

When we turn to the *Nkimba* Guilds we find an organisation more like the *Triad* Society in that it consists of sworn brethren, all men, who admit a limited number into their society. Unlike the initiatory rites of a boy into manhood, which all must take, here we find an *artificial family* within the tribe. The *Nkimba* Guilds have another factor in common with the *Triad* Society in their custom of levying blackmail on the uninitiated members.

of the tribe. They likewise possess a secret language as do the Hung. For the bulk of what follows I am indebted to Dr. Bentley ^(a) and, to a lesser extent, to the Rev. J. H. Weeks.^(b)

At the head of each Lodge was a "doctor" of the Ebaku Order. This word means "elder" and therefore reminds us of the title of "elder Brother" used in the Hung Society. The initiation fee was two dollars worth of cloth and two fowls, and when this had been paid the candidate went to the Lodge house, which was usually in the midst of the jungle, where he was received by the Ebaku, who made him spin round and round until he became giddy and fell to the ground unconscious.¹ He was then supposed to have died and was carried into the Lodge. Sometimes, however, instead of the spinning method a drug was given, which likewise made him unconscious for a time and so enabled other members of the Guild to carry him into the Lodge. On his recovery the initiate's body was whitened with pipe clay, and he was made to dress in a kind of voluminous skirt, consisting of palm fronds. He was then instructed in the secret language, and while there neither he, nor anyone else, was permitted to use the ordinary language of his tribe. If he forgot and used even one ordinary word he was soundly beaten for his lapse. This language is fairly well developed, and while some of the words are modifications of Congo words, others seem to be quite different. It is a most carefully guarded secret, and the punishment for revealing it to outsiders is death. Nevertheless, the Rev. J. H. Weeks collected some 200 words, of which the following must serve as examples:—

| <i>English.</i> | <i>Congo.</i> | <i>Nkimba.</i> |
|----------------------|---------------|----------------|
| To give. | Vana. | Jana. |
| To go. | Knenda. | Diomva. |
| Animal fit for food. | Mbizi. | Nkubuzi. |

English. Fetch me some water to drink.

Congo. Bong'o maza twanua kweto.

Nkimba Diafila ngolumiwa tutefa kubwefo.

Only men were admitted to this Guild, and during initiation they lived apart for a period varying from six months to two years, during which they thoroughly learnt the secret language. Henceforward inside and outside the Lodge they always wore their distinctive dress, had the naked upper half of their bodies, as well as their faces, arms and legs, pipe-clayed white, and used a curious high trilling call which filled the average native with terror. They pretended to hunt down witches and on this plea they levied blackmail on all and sundry. Their pretence of doing police work brings to mind the dreaded

¹ Compare this with the spinning Dervishes.

(a) *Pioniering in the Congo*. I. pp. 282 sq.

(b) *Among the Primitive Bakongo*. pp. 172/sq.

THE HUNG SOCIETY.

Vehm of Germany, which during the Middle Ages terrorised the country side. When a man had completed his period of initiation he was known as a *Mbwamuru Anjata*, or *Full Brother*, and the other brothers were expected to help him in trade, when on his travels, or if he was in any difficulty, just as is the case among members of the Hung Society.

Dr. Bentley says, "It resembles freemasonry in many respects, and like its European cousin, delights in enshrouding itself in mystery." We could wish that Doctor Bentley, or Mr. Weeks, had given us more details of what actually transpired in the Lodge, and so have enabled us to judge as to the correctness of his comparison, for in the process we might have learnt much which would help us to unravel the meaning and origin not only of many things which are puzzling in Freemasonry but also in the closely allied Triad Society. The discovery of the existence among primitive races of secret languages, such as this, particularly when connected with initiation rites based on magic, is of great importance, as it indicates the origin of certain mysterious words which survived in ceremonies of magic even in the Middle Ages. Such words are to-day quite unintelligible, but are supposed to work nevertheless, and to the same family belong *Aum*, *Om* and *Amen*.

The *Nkimba* must not be confounded with the *Men's House*, which is a prominent feature of every Congo village, neither must it be confused with the *Ndembo*, which we shall now proceed to consider.

NDEMBO.

As in the previous Guild, members of the tribe desiring admission to the *Ndembo* Society had to whirl themselves round in order to bring about a swoon. This was supposed to be the cause of their death, and the would-be initiate intimated his desire to enter *Ndembo* by whirling himself round in the market place till he collapsed. Men and women entered this society in the belief that thereby they would acquire a new body, freed from all imperfections. Among the women the principal object was to remove the curse of barrenness.

One of the titles of this Society was *Nai a fwa*, which means, significantly enough, *The Country of the Dead*. The initiates believed that, according to the well known process of sympathetic magic, they could symbolically die and be raised again with a perfect body, free from all disease and defects. The initiates were supposed to die and remain dead for a period varying from six months to three years, after which came their resurrection; the amount of time depending on the patience of relatives who, during the whole period, had to bring food to a specific spot in the forest, near the Lodge House, for the sustenance of the "Ghosts" and their instructors. There was one essential qualification for opening a branch of the Society and that was the curious proviso that it must have an albino as its fetish head. Even a child could serve, and if no actual albino could be found the hair of one was considered to be equally efficacious. The exact reason why an albino was considered essential is uncer-

tain, but it is probable that he was considered to resemble a ghost, who among many of these tribes is stated to be white.¹

After his reception in the Lodge the supposedly dead person was said to decay; his body rotted away till there was only one bone left, which was shown with much ceremony to the anxious relations. Ultimately a grand resurrection day was fixed and the initiates were brought back to their relatives, whom they pretended not to recognise. For some time they kept up the pretence that they were young children, talked a kind of baby language and behaved like overgrown and rather wilful children. This was to signify that they had been reborn. They also received a new name, which was usually of a complimentary nature, such as, *Fair-skinned One*. The initiates were supposed to have learnt a special secret language, but it was nothing like as complex a code as that taught in the *Nkimba* ceremonies. It mainly consisted of using substitute phrases; thus *an eye*, was *Nembweno*, which means, *The Lord of Sight*.^(a) In some cases ordinary words were altered by merely adding *ne* at the beginning and *wa* at the end, thus the ordinary Bakonga word for *A word* was *Diambu*, which in the *Ndembo* secret language became *Nediambulwa*. In addition a few fancy verbs were substituted for the ordinary ones; e.g., *Yalala* is *Ndembo* for *Kwenda*, which means, *to go*. The primitive nature of the sound, which is similar to the noises made by a baby before it can speak, is noteworthy. As we have seen, the *Ndembo* initiates were supposed to be reborn and like babies had to relearn all that they previously knew. Thus *Yalala* is baby talk, and the prefixes and suffixes are probably of the same nature, and similar to the "Baby talk" used by fond mothers in England, e.g., "Didums tumble and hurtums ickle handy pandy." The name for the *Ndembo* secret language was *Kisengi*, and it is clearly of a very different nature from the more scientific secret language of the *Nkimba* society.²

Before closing this section a few further details concerning the organisation of a *Ndembo* Lodge will prove of interest, particularly the Prayer with which the Lodge is opened, which should be compared with that used by the Master of a *Hung* Lodge on a similar occasion.

THE THREE CHIEF OFFICERS IN A NDEMBO LODGE.^(b)

There are five grades and three degrees in a *Ndembo* Lodge—

1. The Master.
2. The Officers.
3. The old members, initiated at a previous meeting.
4. Initiates who come voluntarily.
5. Initiates who are impressed.

¹ Compare this with the Chinese belief that the Souls of the Dead are White.

² For further examples of Secret languages, see Vol. I. p. 128 sq.

(a) Dr. Bentley, *Pioneering in the Congo*. I. p. 286.

(b) Ward, *Who was Hiram Abiff?* pp. 214, sq.

The three degrees are represented by Nos. 3, 4 and 5, but, according to Mr. C. Cyril Claridge,^(a) the Officers and Master also constitute two distinct grades.

It must be remembered that a Ndembo Lodge is usually opened to avert some outbreak of disease, or other disaster, which has overtaken the whole community, and if enough volunteers do not come forward the old members (Grade 3) do not hesitate to impress additional candidates by knocking them on the head and carrying them unconscious into the Lodge. In addition to the Master there are two particularly important officers. This fact is indicated by the prayer which is recited by these three before they attempt to open Lodge. It is addressed to the fetish Nkita, the Demons of Destruction, who distort and twist things and are considered to be responsible for plagues, etc.

It begins thus:—"O, living mystery, Nkita of Destruction, shells¹ which never turn their faces upward. O Priest where is the remedy? I was in trouble, seize upon all outsiders.² . . . O, Nlaza, do not cripple me. I am thy child with the freedom of the family³ (diavulunga, diavulunga) . . . I, innocent with nothing to confess. Since you would destroy me, you destroy your own little animal. . . . I am the maker of the Lodge (Masamba), O Ndembo, I am Ndundu, the wrestler. I am Mvemba of Ndundu who gives birth to monsters.

You are Mfuma (the hollow in trees) where pigs die, where goats die as peace offerings, where the pig is the coverer of secrets (sins), where fowls are as plentiful as their feathers (i.e., as offerings). O Nkumbu and Ngazi! O lubongo lua ngazi! Though your chair become small as if dead, we will sit on it a hundred times with blessings. I shall not sleep hungry in trusting Mvemba and Nlaza. Here I conclude. Let Nkita be exalted. It is Invemba. . . ."^(b)

Elsewhere in his book Mr. Claridge points out the striking similarity which exists between the ancient Babylonian beliefs and those of the Congo natives, and in this prayer there is more than a superficial resemblance to phrases in certain parts of the Babylonian version of the legend of the Deluge. Mr. Claridge says that each of the three repeats this prayer kneeling, with his hands behind his back; he simplifies and explains its purpose thus:^(c)

"The three mentioned have suffered or are suffering some misfortune, which necessitates Ndembo being opened for their benefit. They are guilty before the Nkita (spirits). To remove this guilt and the misfortune, they

¹The evil spirits, Nkita, (a plural word) are supposed to live in shells and unless the mouth of these can be found it is impossible to destroy the spirits or drive them away from their dens.

²Namely, impress outsiders and compel them to come into the secret society because Nkita will not harm those who are members thereof, and thus the plague will be stayed.

³The principals remind the Nkita that they are blood brothers and so they cannot ignore their appeal, or harm them.

(a) *Wild Bush Tribes of Tropical Africa*.

(b) C. Cyril Claridge, *The Wild Bush Tribes of Tropical Africa*. p. 284.

(c) *Ibid.* p. 285.

appeal to the *Nkita*. The first thing is to kill a goat—a peace offering, the guilt bearer—*Nkombo* a *Maboko*. After this they are entitled to plead their innocence. They implore the *Nkita* to stay their anger. They have already suffered. Is it not enough? Is it the will of the *Nkita* to destroy them outright? *Mvemba* and *Nlaza* are rich, powerful, abounding in blessings. Why not compel all without to come in and trust so mighty a union in whom repose a hundred blessings?"

It should be noted that all prayers and offerings made by the Congo native are addressed either to the powers of evil or to the fairies and elemental spirits who preside over the elements, forests, etc., and sometimes, apparently, to the spirits of the dead,—never to God. Yet, they believe that there is a God, the Creator, good and kind, loving and just, only since He will never do them any ill they do not trouble to worship Him.

In considering this ceremony emphasis must be laid on the fact that candidates may be forced to enter the Society and there is abundant evidence that a similar procedure is not unknown among the Hung Brethren. Again and again Government officials have found evidence that where an invitation was not accepted considerable pressure, and even threats, were used to compel certain members of the Chinese community to enter the Society, the usual reason being that the man approached either knew too much to be left free, or else was in a position to help, or hinder, the work of the Society, and it was therefore felt desirable to compel him to join the brotherhood. There are also certain hints in the ceremony that the Vanguard is justified in using such pressure, and in view of the fact that the Society considered that a Political disaster had fallen on China through the downfall of the Mings, and that it was the duty of every loyal citizen to rally to the cause, we can see there is a distinct analogy here with the attitude of the members of a *Ndembo* Lodge.

Before leaving Africa it seems desirable to give in outline a summary of one of the most important rites of initiation of a boy into manhood, which clearly conveys a symbolic journey through the Underworld. We will therefore conclude this section with an account of the Yao rites.

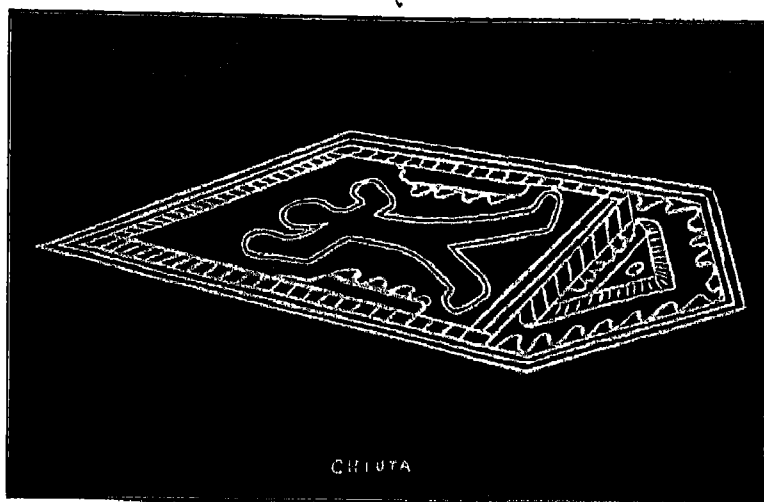
THE YAO RITES OF INITIATION.

For the information here contained I must express my indebtedness to Major M. Sanderson, Chief Sanitation Officer of Nyasaland, who has actually been accepted and obligated as a Master of Ceremonies in these Rites, a privilege never before conferred upon an Englishman. In point of development these Rites mark a considerable advance on the Australian Bushmen, and have several analogies with those of ancient Egypt. It is possible that they have been actually influenced by the ancient Egyptian Mysteries, but it is quite as probable that they represent the type of Rite from which those Mysteries were evolved.

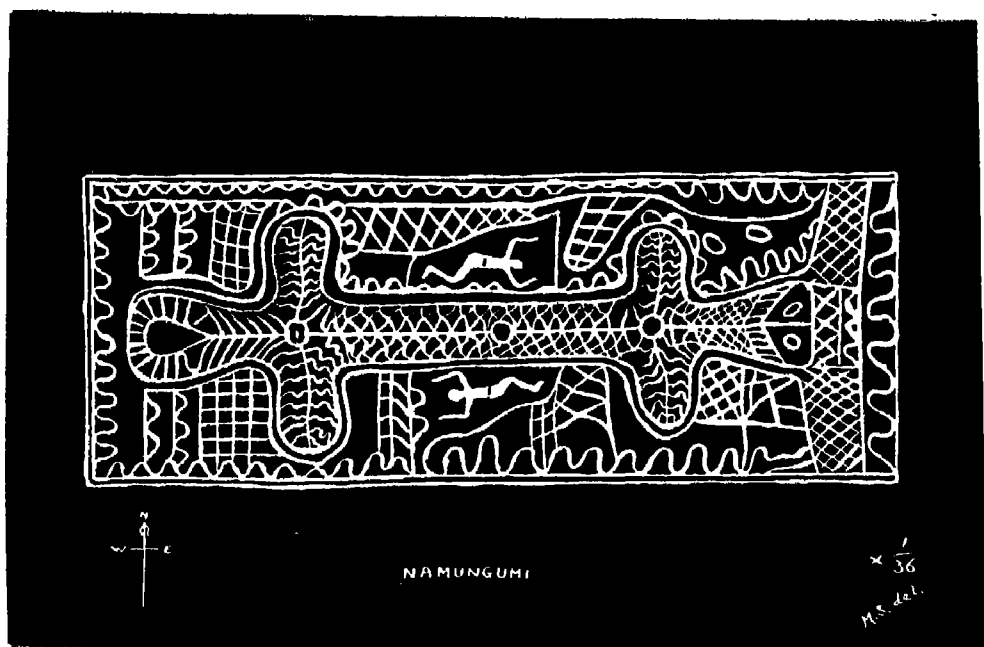
In their essence they appear to be a Fertility Rite, and such rites fall into two main divisions. (a) Rites to increase the fertility of the soil, and (b), those intended to increase the fertility of the men of the tribe. These people have blended the two sets of ideas and to-day they give the boy an outline of how and whence he came, teach him that he must be a good member of the tribe and know its traditions, that he must die in due course, but that death does not end all. There is also a hint of what befalls him after death, and it is this part of the ceremony which here interests us most, but it is necessary to take a glance at the rest of the ceremony, since the whole is a connected unity, and there are hints in the Hung Ritual that some sort of preceding ceremony, representing birth, life and death, was originally connected with their system, and to some extent is still represented in certain incidents in the Traditional History, as, for example, in the slaughter of the monks and the death of A'Tsat. We have also seen that in the Hung ritual there is a vast mass of magical formula still intact, and this is even clearer in the case of the Yao Rites, into which, however, we cannot enter in much detail.

The ground is arranged East and West, with the Sacred Mountain in the East. The latter is an artificial mound (see illustration opposite page 78) on which a pole is set up, and on the side facing West sits the Master of Ceremonies. His insignia is a Gnu's tail, which serves as a whip, or wand of office. In front of this seat at intervals towards the West are designs, or "Tracing Boards," which are drawn on the ground with specially consecrated white flour. These vary in number, but four are never omitted, namely, (1) the phallus and the yoni, signifying birth, though the meaning is almost lost to-day; (2) The Crocodile, (who eats away the moon): (3) The Great Earth Mother, who is depicted as an aquatic animal, with little figures on either side of her making the same sign as is used in the Triad ritual to denote the element of fire. (See illustration opposite page 88.) (4) An actual grave, dug out and then edged with flour. This is in the shape of a man making the Chinese sign for Fire, which is really an appeal to Heaven for aid. (See illustration opposite page 88.)

The Crocodile who eats away the Moon reminds us of the crocodile which is supposed to devour souls in the Egyptian Underworld, or even more of the Chinese dragon which is supposed to swallow the Moon at an eclipse. We cannot press the analogies with the Hung Ceremony too closely, but the "Tracing-boards" may correspond with the Earth-nett Pass, etc., which the candidate is supposed to pass before he reaches the door of the Hung Lodge. The meaning of three of them is clear enough. The phallus and yoni represent birth; the Great Mother, who has breasts, represents that which preserves us through life; while the grave, which is just in front of the Master's seat in the East, can only mean death. Before the Yao candidate reaches this grave a man creeps into it and is covered with a cloth. The conductor, on behalf of the candidate, asks *The Grave* certain questions, which the man therein answers.



THE GRAVE IN THE YAO RITES.



THE GREAT MOTHER IN THE YAO RITES.

There is a special name for this actor, which means, *God*, more especially God as represented by the rainbow. This fact is important, for it seems to imply the idea of a god who dies yet rises from the grave, while the association with the rainbow brings to mind the Rainbow Bridge of the Norse, Byfrost, which links earth and Heaven and is almost precisely similar to the bridge of two planks found in the Triad ritual.

The candidates are then led round the Sacred Mountain seven times, contrary to the sun, which implies that they are dead, for ghosts are supposed to go with the sun in the Underworld, which latter goes in the opposite direction to its apparent movements during the day, in order to return to the East. They then pass between two upright poles down to the river, and there bathe. On emerging from the water each boy is received by a girl of the tribe, who henceforth throughout her whole life stands in a peculiar and privileged position towards him.

In the Holy Mountain we have either the Mountain of the Dawn, the Black Dragon Mountain of the Hung ritual, or, possibly, the Mountain of the Gods itself, while the journey contrary to the sun is similar to the second journey taken by the Candidate in the Three Dots Brotherhood. The river in which they bathe recalls the Waters of the Three Rivers, through which the Hung heroes have to wade, while the girl reminds us of the maiden near the Bridge,^(a) also of Kwan Yin, of the daughter of Biame in the Australian Legend, and of the wife of Uta-Napishtim in the story of Gilgamesh. The two poles between which the candidates pass before they enter the water undoubtedly represent the Gates of the Dawn in the East as seen by a soul emerging from the Underworld and closely approximate to the gates of the City of Willows. One feature about them is peculiar: as the candidate passes through them the poles are swayed to and fro, probably to simulate rebirth.

In addition to the Sign of Fire of the Hung ritual other signs are used, including a sign denoting preservation, while numerous magical ceremonies also take place, but unfortunately we cannot devote further time to this interesting rite, which actually takes many months to complete. Those just given being the ceremonies performed on the last day, which have been preceded by many others, including circumcision.

(a) See Vol. I. p. 89.



A PAIR OF RHINOCEROS HORN CUPS.

CHAPTER XI.

THE JOURNEY OF GILGAMISH TO THE WEST.



HAVING dealt with the beliefs of various primitive races, it now behoves us to consider those of more civilised nations, beginning with ancient Babylon and Egypt. In the Babylonian story it is not clear at first sight that we have passed into the Underworld, and we may therefore regard it as representing a transitional stage in the development of man's theories concerning the next world. But when we turn to ancient Egypt we find quite definitely that the path to Heaven lies through an Underworld whose chief features have been plotted like a map by the Priests. For all that the last tablet of Gilgamish shows clearly that the Babylonians also believed in an Underworld, but the fate of the dead therein seems to have been a dreary one, not unlike the Homeric conception.

Gilgamish, King of Erich, in Babylonia, seems to have been a real historical character, although around him much legendary matter has been grouped by later Assyrian writers. The principal authority for the present narrative is the set of tablets found in the ruins of the library of Nebo and Ashur-bani-pal, at Ninevah, which are now in the British Museum. The story itself, however, is very much older than the date of these tablets, which is c. 680 B.C., and comes down from the Sumerian period. Gilgamish is said to have been two-thirds divine and one-third human, but although among the common people this no doubt implied semi-divine lineage, which indeed all early kings were thought to possess,¹ the proportion, i.e., two-thirds divine, no doubt conveyed to the more educated the idea that only the body of man was mundane, soul and spirit being of God.

Gilgamish, like Solomon, was a great builder, and like him overtaxed his people, who prayed to the Goddess Aruru to send them someone who would control him. She therefore made a man of enormous strength, named Enkidu, but Gilgamish and he became great friends and went through many strange adventures together. In short, they were like David and Jonathan. Enkidu, however, died, apparently because he had aroused the wrath of Ishtar, and the grief of Gilgamish was terrible to behold. He was "like a lioness robbed of her whelps."^(a) As the first transports of his grief subsided a new terror began to

¹The Saxon Kings, the forefathers of King George were supposed to be descended from Wodin, and King George could rightly claim that he is, today, the only European king descended from a heathen god.

(a) *Epic of Gilgamish*, pub. Brit. Mus.

THE JOURNEY OF GILGAMISH TO THE WEST. 91

oppress his soul. He realised that, like Enkidu, he too must die, and for the first time he grew afraid. At this crisis he remembered that his ancestor Uta-Napishtim and his wife had been specially favoured of the gods, because they had escaped the Deluge, in the Ark, and had been transferred to Paradise. He therefore determined to seek them out and obtain from them the secret of Eternal Life. Accordingly he set out towards the West and on the way had to face and overcome many dangers, but at length he reached Mount Mashu,¹ where the sun was supposed to set. The passes leading to this Mountain were closely guarded by strange demons, the Scorpion-men,² whose appearance was so fearsome that ordinary mortals died at the sight of them, and even the mountains collapsed at a glance from their eyes. The Scorpion-men, however, recognised that two-thirds of Gilgamish were divine and received him kindly, warning him of the dangers which awaited him. He informed them of his quest and they replied that the task was impossible, for no man had ever been able to pass through the dark region of the mountain, which required twelve double hours to do.³

Gilgamish refused to turn back, however, and as he went on, the darkness constantly increased. Nevertheless, at the end of the twelfth hour he reached broad daylight, and found himself in a pleasant garden, where was the tree of the gods.⁴ Here he saw the fortress of the goddess Siduri-Sabitu and advanced towards it, but the goddess barred the gates and told him that he looked like a man who had been obliged to flee from his country because of some crime.⁵ Gilgamish indignantly repudiated the charge and explained his object, adding that his woebegone expression was because of the loss of his friend and the fear of death which lay heavy upon him. He also threatened that if she would not help him to go further on his journey he would break down the gates of her fortress.⁶

At length Sabitu told him the way to Uta-Napishtim saying,

"There is no passage most assuredly, O Gilgamish,

And no one from the earliest times, hath been able to cross the sea.

¹Compare with the Black Dragon Mountain in the Triad ritual.

²This seems to correspond with the First Gate in the Hung ritual and the scorpion men should be compared with the Emu-men in the Australian story. In the Babylonian story of Marduk's Fight with Tiamet, the dragon, we learn that the latter created the Scorpion-man, and other monsters, to aid her in the fight. (See *Babylonian Story of the Creation*. Pub. Brit. Mus.) Undoubtedly these monsters represent the signs of the zodiac fighting against the sun, and the Scorpion-man is the sign Scorpio. The journey of twelve double hours no doubt represents the passage of the sun through the houses of the Zodiac.

³It should be noted that the Chinese also reckon the day as consisting of twelve double hour periods.

⁴This is the Tree of Life and should be compared with the Peach trees which the Five Ancestors were admiring on the island, as described in the Hung ritual.

⁵This is the Second Gate.

⁶In ancient days it was quite customary to threaten the gods if they would not heed your prayers. Even today, among primitive races, if the god ignores the petition of the villagers they will take out his statue and beat it.

THE HUNG SOCIETY.

The hero Shamash hath¹ indeed crossed it, but who save he could do so?

The passage is hard and the journey difficult.

And the Waters of Death which block the other end are deep;

How then, Gilgamesh, wilt thou be able to cross the Sea^{2(a)}

And when thou arrivest at the Waters of Death what wilt thou do?"

Finally the goddess relented sufficiently to advise him to go down to the sea shore (which was in sight of her fortress), and ask Ur-Shanabi, (the Boatman of Uta-Napishtim) who was there, to take him across the sea in his boat, So Gilgamesh sought for Ur-Shanabi until he found him, but that worthy³ at first answered him very much as Sabitu had done.⁴ At length, however, he agreed to take him with him if he would go with his axe into the forest and cut down a number of poles, sixty cubits long⁵. When he had done so and had handed them over to the boatman, the latter permitted him to come aboard his boat⁶ and they journeyed thereon for one month and fifteen days.⁷

THE BABYLONIAN NOAH.

On the third day they reached the edge of the Waters of Death, which Ur-Shanabi warned Gilgamesh not to touch with his hands. Meanwhile Uta-Napishtim had seen the boat in the distance and something about it seemed peculiar⁸. He therefore went down to the sea-shore to find out who was the stranger in the boat. As soon as it touched land he asked Gilgamesh why he looked so sad, and what had induced him to come such a long and dangerous

¹The Sun God.

²In like manner the Dheeyabry tried to dissuade Yoonecara from going further.

³Ur-Shanabi was the steersman of Uta-Napishtim's Ark, who survived the flood and, like him, attained immortality.

⁴The Third Gate or trial.

⁵This was a fee for the boatman, and in like manner the Greeks and Romans had to pay Charon a coin for ferrying them across the Styx, but in the days of Gilgamesh coins had not yet been invented. The Romans always buried a coin with a man so that he could pay the fee, and in Medieval England it was customary to close the eyes of the dead by placing on each eyelid a coin, usually a silver penny, a custom not extinct, even today. The poles may be all that is left in the legend of a bridge, although the boat to some extent partakes of the nature of a ferry boat, and may be regarded as a substitute. In any case they should be compared with the fallen tree in the Australian legend.

⁶The length of the journey justifies us in comparing this boat with the Hung boat. It seems probable that it is also in some way the Boat of the Sun, for we were told by Sabitu that the Sun god only could cross the sea. If so it compares well with the boat of Ra in ancient Egypt as well as with the Hung boat, and it is possible that the bark covering used by Yoonecara was really a bark canoe, but as the tribe whose legend it is do not live near the sea in course of time this fact has been forgotten.

⁷It may be only coincidence, but the Captain of the Hung Boat was born on the fifteenth day of the first month. In the Babylonian Story of the Deluge, according to Berosus, the Deluge started on "the fifteenth day of the month, Daesius".

⁸No doubt the boat sank low in the water because there was a living man in it. Compare Dante's experience when in the boat of Charon.

(a) *Epic of Gilgamesh*. Pub. Brit. Mus., p. 52.

journey. To this the hero replied suitably and then asked to be told the secret of Eternal Life. To this appeal Uta-Napishtim replied that nothing on earth lasted for ever. That a man's fate was fixed by Mammitum, and none may foresee even the day of his death, much less escape from it. Whereupon Gilgamish replied that if death was the fate of all how came it that he found Uta-Napishtim, who was his ancestor, still alive. The latter explained that this privilege had been granted to him by the Gods, who had saved him and a remnant of the people when they destroyed the rest of the world in the great deluge. He then related the Babylonian legend of the flood, which is very similar to that found in the Bible.

When he had finished the story he added that after the Ark had come to rest on dry land the god Ea went up to the ship, took him and his wife by the hand, and blessing them, said, "Formerly Uta-Napishtim was a man merely, now let him and his wife be like unto the gods. Uta-Napishtim shall dwell afar off, at the mouth of the rivers."^{1(a)} He then turned to Gilgamish and added, "Now as touching thyself; which of the gods will gather thee to himself so that thou mayest find the life which thou seekest? Come now, do not lay thyself down to sleep for six days and seven nights."^(b) But Gilgamish, worn out with his long journey, failed in the test and fell asleep. So the wife of Uta-Napishtim² gave him a supply of food, and her husband sent him back to earth.

The subsequent adventures of Gilgamish hardly bear on our theme. Although baffled in this effort he tried by other means to obtain Everlasting Life, but unsuccessfully. At length he had resort to magic, and raised the spirit of his dead friend Enkidu. From him he gained but little information, save that the man who was not properly buried could not rest,³ and the friendless man had to wander about the streets of the world eating garbage. From these last statements we learn that, like the Chinese, the ancient Babylonians believed that it was essential for a man to be buried with proper ceremonies, and that a man's friends must make offerings at his tomb if he is to be happy in the next world. Taking the story as a whole we perceive that it has many striking analogies with the Triad Ritual, and avowedly describes a journey to Paradise in search of Eternal Life.

Before leaving Babylonia I would draw attention to the legend that each year Ishtar descended into the Underworld in search of her lost love Damuzi.

¹Note that the Isle of the Blest in the Hung Ritual is where three rivers meet. The land of Uta-Napishtim is, of course, Paradise.

²She gave him seven loaves, one on each day whilst he slept. These should be compared with the roasted carpet snake given to Yonecara—also given by a woman. Uta-Napishtim and his wife call to mind Amithha-Buddha and Kwan Yin, who preside in the Western Paradise of the Buddhist. It may be of interest to note that the Chinese also have a story of the Deluge.

³Compare with some of the penalties attached to the 86 oaths in the Hung Ritual.

^(a)*Epic of Gilgamish*. p. 40.

^(b)*Ibid.* p. 84.

The references to the tragedy are fragmentary, but we learn that as a result of the death of Damuzi, who represented the Spirit of Vegetation, animals and plants ceased to reproduce their species. So serious was the position that the God Ea sent a messenger to the Underworld, demanding from Allatu, the Queen thereof, the return of Ishtar. Meanwhile Ishtar had passed through the seven gates of the Underworld, at each of which she was compelled to pay a fee to the Warden of the Gate, which consisted of one of her garments, till she arrived before the goddess stark naked. Despite these sacrifices, the Queen of the Underworld refused to release Damuzi, and poured contempt on the great Goddess. At this point, however, the messenger from the gods arrived and compelled Allatu to sprinkle Ishtar and Damuzi with the Water of Life so that they might return together to the upper world^(a).

The number of Gates is seven, not three, but there are obviously some analogies in this story, although Ishtar, like Odin, is divine, and so probably went by a different route to that available to mortals. In particular I would draw attention to the Water of Life, which in the Hung Ritual is represented by the Water which reached to the Heavens, and from which the Vanguard drank. Perhaps even more significant is the fact that every year the King of Babylon had to take part in a ritual drama in which he represented Marduk.^(b) In that character he was supposed to pass into the Underworld, and was rescued therefrom by the High Priest, who enacted the part of Nabu. We thus have an old legend transformed into a ritual drama, part of which, as is clear from the Colophons on the tablets, was known only to the initiated.

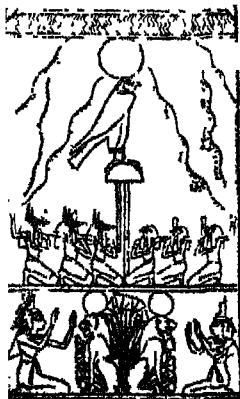
(a)P. Jensen, *Assyrisch-Babylonische Mythen Und Epen*. Berlin, 1900.

P. Dhorme, *La Religion Assyro-Babylonienne*. Paris, 1900.

J. G. Frazer, *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, 3rd Ed., I. p. 8.

Rev. W. A. Wigram, D.D., *M.S.S. Transactions*: II.

(b)Sidney Smith, *The Relation of Marduk, Ashur and Osiris*. *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*. Vol. VIII. (April, 1922.)



PRAISING RA AT SUNSET.

CHAPTER XII.

THE EGYPTIAN PROTOTYPE OF THE HUNG BOAT.



VERY clear summary of the Egyptian conception of the Underworld, after it had developed to maturity, is given by Maspero.^(a)

"The eternal waters, after having flowed during the day passed the ramparts of the world, from East to South, and South to West, arrived every evening at the mouth of the Cleft¹ and were engulfed in the mountains which bordered the earth towards the West, carrying with them the barque of the sun and his cortege of luminous gods.² For twelve hours the divine equipage traversed the long dark corridors, where genii, some hostile, others friendly, either attempted to obstruct it, or assisted it in overcoming the dangers of the journey. From time to time a door guarded by a gigantic serpent opened before it and gave it access to an immense hall, full of monsters; then the narrow dark passages began once more, . . . the struggles with hostile genii and the joyous reception by the friendly gods. In the morning the sun attained the extreme limit of the land of darkness, and issued forth from the mountain of the East to light up a new day. It happened occasionally that living people by magic virtue penetrated these mysterious regions and emerged safe and sound. The Pharoah Rhampsinitus carried away thence the gifts of the goddess Nutt, and Satni, guided by his son, Senosiris, was present at the judgment of souls. But these were exceptions; . . ."

The Egyptian tombs were built so as to reproduce the chief features of the Underworld and the frescoes depicted the demons, or gods, to be met with in each district or Hall. One factor which must not be overlooked is that every Egyptian had a multiple soul^(b) and was, as it were, a habitation in which dwelt a number of quasi-independent entities. These were linked together as is a human clan, but, like the individual members of a clan, were capable of

¹Or the gateway in the Mountains of the West. The Egyptians thought that there was a tree by the cleft, which marked the spot. It was an *acacia* tree, and in it we can perhaps see a prototype of the peach tree in the Hung ritual, the tree of Knowledge in the fresco at Chaldon, a bough of Yggdrasil in the Norse, and the *acacia* in the Masonic tradition.

²A full account of this journey is given in the *Book of Knowing that which is in the Lower Hemisphere*, of which a complete translation and interpretation is given by Maspero in *Les Hypogées Royales de Thèbes* in Vol. II of *Mélanges des Mythologie et d'Archéologie égyptiennes*. pp. 1-181.

(a)Maspero, *Popular Stories of Ancient Egypt*, p. 1x.

(b)See Vol. III. for special chapter on Multiple Souls.

separate and individual action. Therefore one entity, e.g., the Ka, or double, might be in the physical tomb and from it issue into the world of men, while another entity, e.g., the Sahu, might at the same moment be among the Blest in the Isles of Osiris. The same idea exists among many primitive races and even the Greeks had some such belief, as is shown by the statement, in Book XI of the *Odyssey*, that Hercules feasted with the gods and yet there was a form or shade of him in Hades, which actually conversed with Ulysses⁽²⁾. This fact explains certain incidents in the Egyptian stories which we are about to consider; for example, the Isle of the Double in *The Shipwrecked Sailor*, and the fact that the Ka of Ahuri, the dead wife of Nenoferkephthah,⁽³⁾ could come forth from the tomb and tempt Satni. In like manner the Triad ritual clearly postulates three souls or entities in every Chinese, but concentrates on the journey of the soul which goes to the *Dark Land*.

THE JOURNEY TO THE ISLAND OF THE DOUBLE.¹

The hero set out in a big ship to go to the *Mines of the Sovereign*, but a huge wave swamped the vessel and all save the narrator of this story were lost:² he clung to a plank and was washed ashore on a strange island.³ Here he dwelt for three days⁴ alone, finding it, indeed, a very pleasant land containing all manner of fruit and game, on which he subsisted. Having eaten, he made a fire⁵ and offered burnt offerings to the gods. Thereupon he heard a voice like thunder, the earth trembled and he saw a huge serpent, who demanded of him how he got there. As the sailor was too frightened to answer coherently at

¹This story is given by Maspero in *Popular Stories of Ancient Egypt* under the title of *The Shipwrecked Sailor*. The original text is in a papyrus of the 12th Dynasty, in the Hermitage Museum, Petrograd, and attention was first drawn to it in 1880 by W. Golenischeff.

²At the end of the story we find that the ship and crew were *not* lost, for they ultimately rescued him from the island. The original makes no attempt to explain this discrepancy, but we may assume that in reality the sailor was swept into the sea by a wave and the vessel subsequently righted itself. If so the analogy with the fate of Jonah is most striking.

³The Island of the Ka, or Double. Pliny mentions an Island of the Dead in the Red Sea, which was always concealed by mist. (Pliny H. Nat. E. XXXVIII. para. 9.) Maspero suggests that it is the residue of *The Land of the Doubles*, which the early Egyptians thought was in Ethiopia. I suggest that the original of the Island is Socotra, which may also be the original of the Isle of the Blest spoken of by Chinese Buddhists, which we are told lay in the West. See p. 18.

⁴Note the three days, and compare with Jonah's three days in the whale, also that the island subsequently vanished into the sea like the whale on which St. Brendon landed, thinking that it was an island.

⁵We are specifically told that he used a fire stick, as did Lucian in the interior of the whale. Probably there was something magical about the fire for it had the effect of evoking the Guardian Spirit.

(2) See page 181.

(3) *The Adventure of Saint-Khamois with the Mummies*, translated by Maspero in *Popular Stories of Ancient Egypt*. The original is a Demotic text of the time of the Ptolemies.

once, the great snake¹ took him in its mouth and carried him off to its lair, but in no way hurt him.²

The snake again questioned him and the sailor related how he had been cast ashore on the island by a wave, and had not voluntarily trespassed on his territory. The serpent thereupon was satisfied and told him not to be alarmed, "for if thou comest to me it is because God has permitted thee to survive and He has led thee to this Isle of the Double." The serpent added that it was a pleasant island and that he would have to stay there for four months, and then would be rescued by a vessel and sailors whom he knew well, concluding with the remark that he would die in his own City.³ The sailor, in a transport of joy, promised to send the serpent all manner of choice gifts, but the latter politely declined them, saying that he already had every precious thing he needed, and adding, "As soon as thou art departed from this place thou wilt never behold this Island again—it will transform itself into waves, therefore the messengers could not hope to find it." And lo! the vessel came as he had predicted, and the sailor recognised those who were thereon. Before he departed the great serpent gave him all manner of precious things, so that the vessel was heavy laden, and he returned safely to Egypt.

While the information gained as to the kind of life the Kas enjoyed is almost negligible, the story is important as being the possible origin of the tale of Jonah, and the basis of the legend on which Lucian wrote his *Vera Historia*, also, as indicated previously, it is exceedingly probable that this legend reached China and is the origin of their Isle of the Blest. One thing seems fairly certain, namely, that it is derived from the story of the Voyage of the Solar Barque and shows how religious and mythological conceptions, even while still current in their original form, can become the basis of a more or less secular story of the fairy tale type. Maspero⁽⁴⁾ is emphatically of the opinion that this story is connected with the journey of the Soul in the Solar Barque towards the West, and it is thus similar to many other tales we have already discussed, which are based on the same conception.

Having thus seen that Egypt had her own Jonah legend, it is satisfactory to find that she also had her own version of the journey of Æneas through the Underworld. Just as in the last story we had the prototype of the Hung boat and the Isle of the Blest, so in the next we shall recognise several other Hung features. Unfortunately it is neither as long nor as precise as we should like,

¹Compare with the serpent on the island visited by the Shipwrecked Mariner in the Tale of the *Queen of the Serpents*, which, like this serpent, treats the Mariner kindly. See p. 118.

²This serpent had a whole family of serpents, seventy-five in all, and Maspero considers that it is the Guardian of the Island, similar to the Serpent Guardians of the Halls of the Underworld. That the sailor did not see the Kas of the Dead is explicable by the Egyptian belief that the Ka is normally of a very tenuous nature, like a Ghost, whereas the Serpent Guardians were more corporeal. These should be compared with the Nagas of Hindu legends.

³This shows clearly that although the sailor thought that the vessel had sunk with all on board the serpent knew otherwise, and the sailor ultimately discovered his mistake.

⁽⁴⁾*Popula Stories of Ancient Egypt*. p. lxxiv.

and only represents a small part of the journey of the Soul, namely the middle part. In a sense the first story represents the journey of the Soul in the Solar Barque into the Underworld. Beyond this there were two stages, namely, when the dead man disembarked in order to stand his trial before Osiris, and his journey to the Elysian Fields,—if he were deemed worthy. The story of Satmi deals only with this middle portion, which, however, from the Egyptian standpoint was the crucial part.

HOW SATMI-KHAMOIS VISITED THE HALLS OF JUDGMENT.^{1(a)}

Satmi was a great Egyptian magician and had a wonderful child born to him by his wife. The boy, who was named Senosiris, was a prodigy of learning, and when he was twelve there was no scribe or magician in Memphis who equalled him in wisdom. Now Senosiris was really the great magician, Horus, Son of Penishi, of a former age, who had become incarnate again in order that he might help Egypt against an Ethiopian sorcerer, but this fact Satmi did not discover until the end of the adventure.

One day Satmi was on the roof of his house and he saw two men being carried out for burial. One was a rich man, whose funeral was very splendid, while the other was a poor man, who was merely wrapped in a mat and had no one to lament over him as he went to his place of interment. So Satmi exclaimed, "Let there be done to me in Amentit,² as for these rich ones who have great lamentation, and not as these poor ones who are carried to the mountain without pomp or honours." But Senosiris said, "Let there be done to thee . . . that which is done for that poor man in Amentit, and . . not that which is . . . done to that rich man in Amentit."

Satmi was astonished at this remark of his son³ and was at first inclined

(a)From *The Veritable History of Satmi-Khamois and His Son Senosiris*, related by Maspero in *Popular Stories of Ancient Egypt*.

¹The original is a Demotic text, Papyrus DCIV in the British Museum. It is on the reverse side of two collections of official documents written in Greek and dated Year VII of Claudius Caesar, i.e. A.D. 46—47. The Demotic portion, however, is probably not earlier than the latter half of the second century, A.D., although the story itself may be much older. It is unfortunate that we cannot find out definitely whether it is earlier than the present copy, as its similarity to the Gospel incident of Dives and Lazarus raises many interesting problems. Even this copy is older than any extant text of the New Testament, but doubtless the latter are copies of older works now lost, while the same may be true of the legend of Satmi. The names Satmi and Satmi are identical.

²Or Amentit, the Underworld. It is clear that Satmi thought that those who were thus well buried would thereby be assured of all the necessary comforts in the Underworld, which the poor man would lack. This was the old belief, but his son shows him that it is merit, not wealth, which counts in the Underworld.

³The cause of the journey is important, for it tends to indicate that this version is earlier than the Biblical story. There is no reason in the latter why we should expect that his wealth would help Dives, but to Satmi it seemed obvious that the rich would be better off in the next world than the poor, for he thought that the dead had there only what the living provided for them at the funeral, and thereafter, at stated intervals, in the form of tomb offerings. The same belief is held by the Chinese. Senosiris, while not denying that the dead needed the offerings of the living, shows that the just Osiris adjusts matters by transferring the offerings made for

to think that it was a curse, but Senosiris promised to show him why he had said it. He then led his father "to a place that he did not know of in the Mountain of Memphis."¹ They passed through seven large Halls,² full of men of all types. The first three they passed through without any remarkable adventure, but on entering the fourth Satmi saw people who ran about aimlessly, while asses ate up the food behind them. He also saw people whose food and water hung above their heads, and as they jumped to eat it others dug away the ground from under their feet, so that they could never reach the food and drink for which they longed.³

When they reached the fifth hall Satmi noticed that the pivot-pin of the door rested on the right eye of a man, who prayed and screamed in anguish. He also saw suppliants waiting in the doorway to be tried, and inside the hall "the venerable manes" seated in their proper places. In the sixth hall he beheld the gods on their thrones, and in the seventh Osiris himself. On his left was Anubis and on his right Thoth, while other gods and good spirits were seated to the right and left. In front of Osiris was the balance, where they weighed the misdeeds of each man against his good deeds. Anubis looked to the tongue of the balance, and Thoth wrote down the result.⁴ Him whose misdeeds were more numerous than his good deeds they delivered to Amait,⁵ who destroyed him body and soul. Him whose good deeds more than balanced his evil deeds they enthroned among the gods of the Council of Amentit, and his soul went to Heaven.⁶ He whose merits were equal to his faults was admitted to live amongst those who served Sokarosiris.⁷

the rich, but wicked, man, to the poor, but good, man. Another factor is that in the Biblical story we are not specifically told that Dives was wicked and Lazarus good, though we like to assume it. Nevertheless the story can be read as implying that Dives suffered not for his sins, but merely because he had already had his share of good things, and each man's share is limited by fate. Lazarus, however, had not exhausted his fair share during mortal life and so was enabled to receive more. It looks almost as if the scribe who inserted this story had forgotten the merit motive and at the end remembered it, and referred to it in the appeal of Dives that Lazarus might warn his brothers who were still on earth.

¹i.e. He led him by the way of the Mountain of the Sunset into the Underworld.

²The Halls of the Palace of Osiris as Judge of the Dead: compare with the Hall of Fidelity and Loyalty in the Hung ritual.

³These are an Egyptian form of incidents related in *Odyssey* Bk. XI concerning Tartarus. Which, if either, has borrowed from the other, it is difficult to say.

⁴Compare with the Scales used in the Triad ceremony, and the Pen placed on the altar, with which the 86 Oaths are written.

⁵The destroyer of souls. She destroyed them completely, we are told, yet for all that we find that some of the wicked, like the rich man, lay in torment. Perhaps there were grades of iniquity and it was only the utterly bad who were annihilated, the others being punished, presumably for a limited period, but this is nowhere specifically stated. In the Hung ritual the Red Youth near the Fiery Furnace corresponds with Amait.

⁶That is, one portion of his entity became a judge, or perhaps we should say a juryman, in the Underworld, while his highest portion entered the Elysian Fields. It may be that in like manner the highest portion of an evil man was utterly destroyed, and his grosser part allowed to survive in order that it might be tormented for ever. The multitudinous non-corporeal portions of man in Egyptian theology renders it difficult to decide this point. In like manner among the Chinese the three souls of man had different fates.

⁷Clearly an intermediate state of existence. Not the true Elysian Fields, but probably a position among the Judges in the Underworld.

Satmi, having learnt these facts from his son, noticed among those seated near Osiris "one clad in fine linen and in a lofty rank," and Senosiris explained that this was the poor man, who because his good deeds were more numerous than his bad, was thus honoured by Osiris and, "as there was no total of happiness while he was on earth sufficient to correspond with the length of life inscribed to his account by Thoth, an order was given on the part of Osiris to transfer the funerary outfit of the rich man . . . to this poor man, beside placing him among the venerable Manes, in the fief of Sokarosiris, near the place where Osiris is. That rich man thou sawest, he was taken to Hades, his misdeeds were weighed against his merits, the misdeeds were found more numerous than his merits that he had on earth, and command was given that he should be punished in Amentit, and he it is whom thou sawest with the pivot of the door planted on his right eye."

Senosiris in like manner explained the other scenes they had witnessed, and then led his father back to earth up a mountain, "holding his father embraced and his hand in his hand."¹ Satmi asked his son whether the mountain by which they returned to the upper world was the same as that by which they had descended from it, but Senosiris, for some reason not explained in the story, made no reply. No doubt, however, they returned by a different path, a fact which Satmi evidently suspected, as is shown by his question, and that would be by the Mountain of the Dawn.

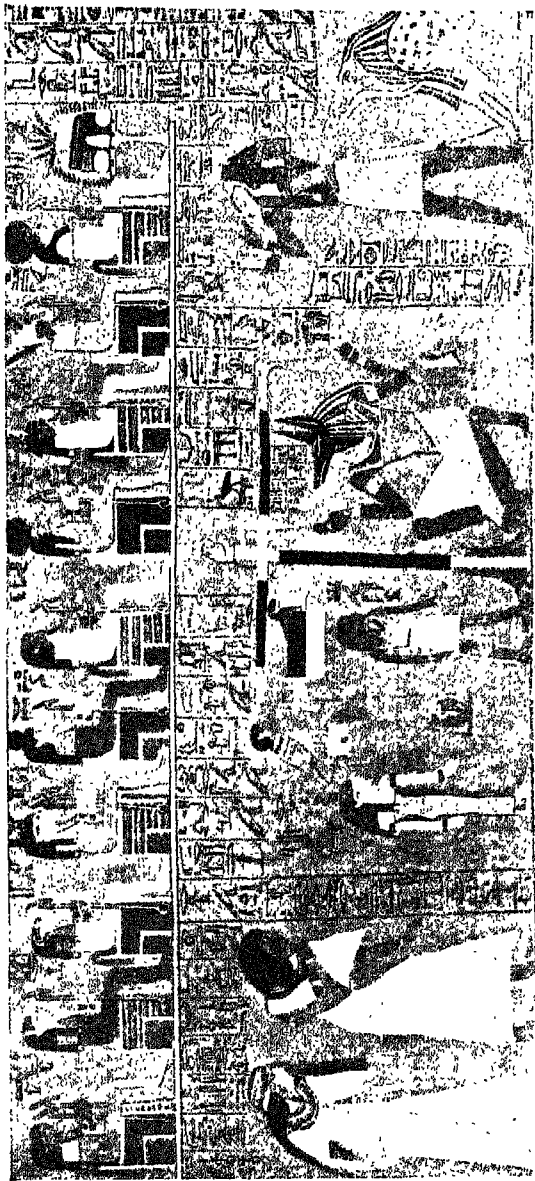
These two stories together give a fair idea of the Egyptian Underworld, and the fact that they have become separated is important as it explains how in later legends we find two distinct traditions, one connected with a voyage in a boat to the Isles of the Blest, and the other describing a journey through the Underworld. The Hung ritual, however, seems to have kept the whole tradition together, a fact which suggests that it is of great antiquity.

THE EGYPTIAN STORY OF THE JOURNEY OF THE SOUL.

Let us now compare with these two stories the beliefs of the ancient Egyptians on the question of what befalls a man after death. Our principle source of information is the so-called *Book of the Dead*², but when we come to study it we find that it consists mainly of spells, charms and incantations which had to be known by the deceased, or were said on his behalf by the Priests at certain critical points in the journey. Unfortunately the more obvious dangers which beset the soul in the Underworld were so well known to the ancient Egyptians that, apparently, no one ever troubled to write them down in a connected account. It is only by casual references in the spells and invocations that we can glean exactly what was

¹This curious phrase implies that the son led the father out of the Underworld by the grip, and in a way familiar to M.M.s. In like manner, Anubis, son of Osiris, raised that god to life again.

²For a short but convenient summary see *The Book of the Dead*, pub. by the Brit. Mus., or, for a fuller account, the excellent translation by Dr. E. A. Wallis Budge, in three vols. .



THE WEIGHING OF THE SOUL OF ANI.

believed to occur. Furthermore, the chapters of the *Book of the Dead* were not arranged in the chronological order in which events were supposed to occur, but were grouped more or less arbitrarily by the scribes, while, in order to increase their own prestige, and also the fees demanded from relations, the Priests not only incorporated all sorts of conflicting beliefs but multiplied the dangers awaiting the dead by constant duplication.

For example, the dead had to overcome a great serpent, the age-old symbol for evil, and this serpent in different parts of Egypt had doubtless different names among the original tribes. These names are retained and other serpents added, so that instead of one serpent, *Apep*, we meet with several, against all of whom spells must be uttered, and whose names must therefore be known. Thus many charms were required and had to be paid for by the relations of the deceased. In like manner the Boat of the Sun has been reduplicated several times. In consequence we find a complete jumble of crude spells, savage customs and materialistic beliefs, side by side with many fine moral precepts and lofty mystical teachings, and the simple framework found in the story of Yoonecara, and even in Gilgamesh, has been overlaid with a mass of bewildering detail. It is, however, possible to pick out the ancient landmarks and to give an outline of the journey, which shows the same essentials as are found in the earlier stories and is in striking analogy with the Hung ritual. One fact must be noted carefully: in Yoonecara the three gates, or divisions, are apparently still on earth and seem to correspond symbolically to birth, to initiation into manhood and to death, whereas in Egypt the first gate symbolises death, and is the actual gateway to the Underworld. Herein it is nearer to the form found in the Hung ritual. This then in brief is the Egyptian journey:—

The soul passed the sacred mountain, the Mountain of Sunset, in the West, and then through the Gates of Amentit^(a).¹ He next entered the Boat of Ra, the Sun, and with him travelled through the dark hours of the night till he came out in the Tuat at dawn.² He had to take with him in the boat for this journey seven loaves, and these are said to represent heaven and earth.³ His mouth was ceremonially opened^(c) so that he might testify freely before Osiris.⁴ At some unspecified point in this journey he had to

¹ Compare with the Yao Rites where two pillars stand just beyond the Sacred Mountain. Also with the journey of Gilgamesh through the darkness of the mountain.

² That is, he travelled the reverse way of the sun on earth, just as the sun was supposed to do while travelling underground at night. See chapter V.

³ Compare with the seven loaves given to Gilgamesh by Uta-Napishtim for the return journey. The fact that they are said to represent heaven and earth calls to mind the Circle of Heaven and Earth in the Triad ceremony. No doubt originally the loaves were a fee to the Heavenly boatman, and symbolised the fact that everything in Heaven and earth were his.

⁴ Compare with the awakening of Gilgamesh by Uta-Napishtim.

(a) *Book of the Dead*. Chap. 1.

(b) *Ibid.*, xiii.

(c) *Ibid.*, xiv.

overcome the serpent Apep,^(a) on whom he trampled with his left foot first.¹ He next had to vanquish Sui, the monster crocodile, who had the power of turning into the four crocodiles, which guarded the four quarters.² He did so because he knew its name, and then he identified himself with the four gods who presided over the four quarters, because he likewise knew theirs.^{3(a)} His own name was then restored to him, and with it memory, while soon after his heart, and later his shadow, were re-united to him once more.⁴

At last he reached the Hall of Judgment and entered its gates.⁵ The gods therein were seated on squares,⁶ and before them he first recited what is commonly called *The Thirty-six Denials*, since each was an assertion that he had not committed some particular sin, after which he declared that he had lived righteously,^(b) doing so in the form of the negative confession, e.g., "I have not allowed anyone to hunger. I have not committed fornication. I have not defrauded the oppressed. I am pure." Next his heart, *Ab*, was weighed by Anubis in the scales of Thoth⁸ against the feather, the symbol of truth, while Thoth⁸ stood by with pen⁹ in hand to write down the verdict. If the scales were level he was declared, "True of heart," and brought before Osiris, but if he failed at the weighing of souls he was at once annihilated, his body being cut to pieces and flung into a lake of fire.^{10(b)} The successful candidate was then led into an inner sanctuary, the name of whose gate¹¹ he had to know, where he was received by Thoth who, being satisfied that he was "True

¹Reference has already been made to the universal custom of attacking an evil spirit in this way, but the following is also of interest as showing the survival of ancient beliefs. E. W. Lane in *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* describes a custom prevalent in Cairo in 1886. Women who desired children, etc., went to the stone table whereon the dead bodies of criminals who had been decapitated were washed, and stepped under and over it seven times, with the left foot first, afterwards washing their faces in the water polluted by the blood of the dead man. Herein we have a dim memory of customs which aim at facilitating the reincarnation of a dead man. In the Hung ritual candidates enter left foot first, but in this case it is, of course, in analogy with the dead man who tramples upon Apep.

²Compare with the crocodile in the Yao rites.

³Compare with the Triad ritual where the Vanguard has to give the names of the four Generals in the City of Willows who guard the Four Cardinal Points.

⁴These were other "Souls" of the man who was thus enabled to gather together all his personalities. With regard to the shadow and its importance, see Vol. I. Ch. xiv.

⁵The Second Gate, leading into the Hall of Loyalty and Fidelity, in the Hung Ritual.

⁶See illus. op. p. 100. Squares are often used as symbols of justice. The first mythological Chinese Emperor is depicted holding a square while his wife holds a pair of compasses. See illus. op. p. 122.

⁷Compare with the 86 Oaths of the Hung ritual. The fact that there were also 86 denials is interesting.

⁸Compare with the Scales in the Hung Ceremony.

⁹The pen used in the Hung ceremony to write down the 86 Oaths seems to correspond with the pen of Thoth, and the emphasis laid on truth and true of heart in both accounts is worthy of note.

¹⁰Compare the Fiery Furnace in the Hung ritual.

¹¹The Third Gate, or Gate of the City of Willows, in the Triad Ritual.

(a)Ibid. VII.

(b)See chapter I. and also cxxv.

of heart" took him to Osiris, who bestowed on him immortal life. A new spiritual body was given to him in which all his separate personalities could re-unite, the technical name for which was *Sahu*, and in it he entered the kingdom of Osiris.^(a) Probably this transformation corresponded with that mentioned in Chapter lxxii where the deceased prays that he may be reborn in the Mesqet Chamber.¹

According to the *Book of Gates* the kingdom of Osiris was the sixth division of Tuat, but in course of time it absorbed the whole Underworld. On the soul's arrival there Ministers of Osiris took it to the homestead which had been allotted to it by Osiris, and the vignette in Chapter cx. shows us what the Elysian Fields of the Egyptians were like. It was a flat, well watered country, intersected by canals, and in it there were several islands,^(b) the Isles of the Blest, in one of which Osiris dwelt. This was named *The Isle of Truth*,² and the Ferry-man of Osiris would not convey to it any soul who had not been declared "True of word" by Osiris,³ Thoth and the other gods in the Judgment Hall. Clearly, therefore, there were two orders of souls, as previously indicated; firstly, ordinary folk, who were allowed to survive the judgment and dwelt thereafter in the Elysian Fields, and secondly, the Saints, who were admitted to the Isle of Truth.⁴

The Elysian Fields consisted of the ideal Egyptian farm, where the happy souls ploughed and reaped under perfect conditions, and where they met their ancestors. In one part was the dwelling place of the Aakhu, or beatified souls, and it was probably these who were permitted to visit the Isle of Truth, of whom it is written that "They live on truth and eat daily the Bread of Everlastingness."⁵ The Maat plant, or sacred wheat, from which this bread was made was called the "Members of Osiris," and since Maat means, "Truth" and Osiris was the Wheat God we learn firstly, the sacramental belief that they fed on the God of Truth, and secondly, how in course of years a Vegetation Rite became transformed into something more mystical.

Thus we see that the Egyptian Priests catered for all types of worshippers. For the materialists they envisaged a materialistic heaven,⁶ which would

¹ Compare Red Flower Pagoda.

² This seems to have been "The High Heavens" of Egypt, while the Elysian Fields were Paradise. The ferry clearly corresponds with the bridge which in the Hung ritual links the island with the Market of Universal Peace. It may also be compared with Charon's ferry in Classical Mythology, which, however, conveyed souls to the Hall of Pluto, not to the Elysian Fields.

³ In a certain Masonic Order only those who honour truth can pass the bridge, and in the Hung ritual it is because the Shades of the Hung Heroes recognise that the candidate is *loyal and true* that they throw in the stepping stones to enable him to cross.

⁴ In like manner in the Hung ritual the ordinary Hung warriors remained on the island, but the Five Ancestors dwelt in houses in the City of Willows.

⁵ Compare with the peach fruits in the Triad ceremony which also symbolises long, or Eternal life.

⁶ As is the case in the Hung ritual, where there are orchards, rice fields, pools of water, etc.

(a) See chapter cxxv.

(b) *The Book of the Dead*, pub. Brit. Mus.

appeal to the average peasant, while the spiritually minded were taught that they were brought into direct communion with the God of Truth, were clothed with a celestial body, and fed on Truth itself, for Osiris says to them:—"Ye are beings of truth . . . take ye your rest because of what ye have done, becoming even as those who are in my following, and who direct the House of Him Who is Holy . . . I command that ye have your being to the limit (of that land) with Truth and without sin."^(a)

EGYPTIAN AND HUNG PARALLELS.

Before closing this brief account of the journey of the Egyptian soul through Tuat, we will notice a number of references which may be of use to those who wish to study the matter further. Chapter LVIII is a charm to give the deceased the use of a magic boat in the Elysian Fields; this he obtains if he can give its name, the name of the oars, rudder, etc., and should be compared with the detailed questions concerning the Hung Boat.

Chapter LXIII describes a burning or boiling lake, which should be compared with the Fiery Ditch mentioned in some of the Triad rituals, with the Fiery Lake spanned by the bridge in the Mediæval Purgatory, and with the Bridge of Iron which, according to the Mahommedans, crosses the pit of Hell. From some of the Papyri we learn that there were pools in the Tuat, the water of which was cool and refreshing to those who were speakers of truth but which scalded the wicked. This is an analogy with the Hung Peaches.

Chapter LXVIII describes the happy life of the soul in the Isles of the Blest and the food which he eats. It is interesting to compare this account with the plan of the City of Willows.

Chapter XCI contains spells to prevent the deceased from losing his khaibet, or shadow, and we learn that in due course the shadow, the ka (or double), the ba, (or soul), the ab, (or heart), and his personal name are reunited, to make him once more a perfect man. The whole of this chapter is interesting to us for we have seen what an important part the shadow and the reflection play in the Hung ritual, and that there is a plain hint that the three souls, although they travel by different roads, ultimately re-unite in the City of Willows.

In Chapter XCVIII he invokes the Great Bear by name and obtains the use of a sacred boat. These facts should be compared with the seven lamps in honour of the Great Bear which stand on the Hung altar, and in conjunction therewith it is well to bear in mind that among the Chinese the dwelling place of Shang Ti, who is essentially the God of Justice, was in the Great Bear. This chapter also describes the sacred ladder of which the papyrus of Ani contains a picture. It is likewise found in the Pyramid texts and is said to have been made for Osiris, to enable him to ascend to Heaven. It was set up by Horus, who supported it on one side (typifying light) whilst the other side

^(a) *Book of the Dead*. Pub. Brit. Mus., p. 83.

EGYPTIAN PROTOTYPE OF THE HUNG BOAT. 1

was supported by Set (typifying darkness). A similar ladder is found among the ancient Mexicans, down which Quetzacoatl descends,^(a) and is not unknown in certain Mysteries still in existence in the West. In the Triad ritual the references to the Ladder of Fame are probably a reminiscence of the idea and, in any case, the opposition between Ming (Light) and Ts'ing (Darkness) justify us in noting the parallel.

Chapters CVII—CIX describe the Mountains of Sunrise and the entrance to the Elysian Fields. By this time the soul, who entered in the West by the Mountain of Sunset, has circumnavigated the Underworld with the Sun, *Réa*, and comes out at the Dawn into the Elysian Fields. By so doing he secures the right to travel on the boats of Sunrise and Sunset. In these chapters we not only have references to the prototype of the Hung boat, but the Black Dragon Mountain is obviously the Mountain of Sunset, while the fact that in many of the plans of Triad Lodges, Mountains are depicted round the walls of the City of Willows, suggests that here, too, there is a dim memory of the Mountains of the Dawn.

Chapter CL gives the names of the fourteen districts of the Kingdom of Osiris, and in chapter CLII there is a formula for providing the deceased with a house in the Celestial City of Anu. This brings to mind the detailed geographical description of the City of Willows and the fact that houses therein are allotted to Hung Heroes.

We thus see that, despite repetitions and the corruption of the text of the *Book of the Dead*, it is possible to trace in outline striking similarities between the journey of the soul through Tuat and that of the Hung Heroes. We also find practically all the essential features which form the framework of the Triad ceremony, together with many interesting details. There are Gates to be passed, the Boat of the Soul, the Scales, the Obligations, the Hall of Judgment (corresponding to the Hall of Fidelity and Loyalty), the Elysian Fields and the Isles of the Blest. The Ferry replaces the Bridge, or Stepping Stones, and the Isles of the Blest are the Highest Heavens. Even the Holy City itself is hinted at, for we find mention of a Celestial Heliopolis (City of the Sun) and the Celestial City of Anu.

It is also worth recording that certain signs seem to have been used at critical moments in the journey, several of which are found all over the world, but with the exception of the Triad signs for Fire and for Wood I have not definitely identified any with those used by the Hung Society, although several are of interest to Masons. There are also a number of grips employed, while we can probably trace the origin of some of the fantastic penalties found in various Mysteries to the punishments awaiting the wicked in Tuat. One of those mentioned is that of having one's heart plucked out, and another is to be chopped in pieces, which latter corresponds with one of the punishments awaiting those who break the 86 Oaths of the Hung Ceremony.

(a) J. S. M. Ward, *Freemasonry and the Ancient Gods*. Ills. op. p. 252.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE LAST JOURNEY OF YUDISHTHIRA AND OTHER INDIAN VERSIONS OF THE JOURNEY.



HAVING seen what the ancient civilisation of Egypt can tell us concerning the after-life let us turn to India, that vast country whence China herself derived so many of her religious beliefs. Fortunately we possess a record of the beliefs of the Hindus which deals with the period contemporary, at any rate, with the New Empire in Egypt. The Mahabharata is a curious mixture of epic incidents, not unlike those which appear in Homer, and of the later Hinduism of the opening centuries of the Christian era. It may, indeed, be said that it is a store-house of beliefs belonging to every period of Indian history, for popular minstrels have continually added events and ideas in order to bring it up to date. One thing, however, clearly shows its real antiquity, namely the fact that Draupadi has five husbands, a practice so repugnant to Hindu and Aryan teaching in general that its survival in this epic shows that the revisers of the period of the Bhagugita dared not alter this incident, because it had been known and told by so many generations of story-tellers.

Thus in the main episode which we shall now consider, the last journey of Yudishthira, we are dealing with beliefs current in India in pre-Buddhist days, and probably contemporary with, or even anterior to, Homer in Greece. It must also be remembered that despite the theological teachings of successive generations of religious reformers in India this story is still related and repeated by the story-tellers of that country, even in the 20th century, and has never become lost to the population in general. The story itself relates the last journey of Yudishthira, his four brothers and their common wife, Draupadi, and is given in the two concluding books of the Mahabharata, *The Great Journey* and *The Ascent into Heaven*, a beautiful English version of which was written by Sir Edwin Arnold.

Throughout his life Yudishthira was constantly supported by Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu, who himself descended into the Underworld and brought forth therefrom his brothers, who had been slain as infants, and restored them to life. Yudishthira was in many ways a model of chivalry, and after the terrible battle which broke the power of the Kurus he ordered that friends and foes alike should be buried with the "Prescribed ceremonies."

Ostensibly Yudishthira is the pattern of all kingly virtues, but there is another interpretation of his character which hints that in real spirituality

he fell far behind Draupadi and his four brothers. According to this view his fault was the worst of all, since by gambling away his kingdom he was false to his *duty* as a King, who is responsible for the happiness of his people, and therefore he alone has to go the whole of the journey. This interpretation is supported by the fact that he did not re-assume the kingdom even after the Asvamedha, but instead gave it to a Sage named, Vyasa, who, however, handed it back to him, and Krishna finally persuaded the monarch to accept it. The Asvamedha, or horse sacrifice, will be considered later in connection with the *Triad* sacrifice of an Ox and a White Horse.¹

Ultimately Krishna died and returned to Heaven, and Yudishthira placed Prakshit, the grandson of Arjuna, on the throne, and set out with Draupadi and his brothers on their last journey. This is really the journey through the Underworld, although the fact is somewhat disguised by the apparent death of Draupadi and the four brothers. The five who die probably represent the five senses, which gradually desert man as death approaches, but the true self survives and reaches the gate of the next world.

As they are setting out a dog joins the band and attaches himself to Yudishthira. After a short time they are met by Agni, the god of fire, who demands the surrender by Arjuna of his magic bow. This Arjuna has to throw into the sea, and the incident typifies the First Gate, guarded by the gods of Water and Fire. Soon after Draupadi falls down and dies, "because she loved Arjuna too much." In quick succession Sahadeva, Nakula, Arjuna, and finally mighty Bhima fall, and as the latter dies he learns that it is because he was a glutton and a swearer. This indicates the loss of the senses of the mouth, or speech, and it should be noted that Bhima's offence was much grosser than that of Draupadi, whose love for Arjuna was perfectly natural, and it therefore implies that Yudishthira, who had to go still further, far from being the best, was the worst of the band. He and the dog continue their journey without ever looking back, therein reminding us of the Red-skin Brave and *his* dog. Finally they reach the gates of Paradise where Yudishthira is told that he is welcome, but that the dog, being unclean, cannot be admitted. The hero refuses to abandon his faithful companion even to gain Paradise, and is about to turn away when the dog is suddenly transformed into the figure of Dharma, the God of Duty. Thereupon the King is admitted and given a seat in Paradise, but on looking round he cannot find his dead brothers or Draupadi, although he sees many of his former foes. When he enquires for his lost companions he is told that they are in Hell where they must remain, for he alone is deemed worthy of Paradise. He replies that in such circumstances he cannot remain, for where his brothers and Draupadi are there would he also be.

The testing at the gate seems to represent the Second Hung Gate, and this further trial of his fortitude the Third. It is significant that it takes place in

¹See Vol. III.

the presence of the lesser gods, and is really a test of his fidelity and loyalty, which reminds us of the Hall of Fidelity and Loyalty in the Triad ritual. The temptation is a subtle one for he is "being weighed in the scales," and his conduct proves that he is "True hearted." This, then, is the Judgment Hall, and *Paradise* is the *Earthly Paradise*, not the *High Heavens*. By losing this Paradise he later gains the High Heavens.

On hearing his answer the gods lead him out of Paradise and he is met at the entrance of a dismal cave by the King of Hell. Holding a torch in his hand he leads Yudishthira through the bowels of the earth and along a narrow causeway, or bridge of rocks. On either side the king hears the wailing of the damned, and every now and then the air is rent by the shrieks of those in torment, while overhead fly bats and foul monsters never seen on earth. Gradually, as his eyes grow accustomed to the darkness, he perceives in the chasm on either side of his path the souls of the lost, whose features are made faintly visible by the torch of his conductor. Suddenly he hears Draupadi's voice and then sees her and his brothers, who beg him to come to them and ease them in their pain. Without a moment's hesitation Yudishthira leaps down into Hell to join them, but at once Hell vanishes and he finds it is illusion: he is in Heaven itself and sees Draupadi and his brothers already seated on thrones, while near them are his old friends and forefathers.

Indra himself takes him by the hand and places him on the throne, and as he does so points out each dearly loved face in turn.

"This, Yudishthir, is thy father, by thy mother joined in Heaven,
Oft he comes into my mansions in his flowery chariot driven.

This is Bhishma, stainless warrior, by the Varsus is his place,
By the God of Heavenly Wisdom teacher Drona sits in grace.

These and other mighty warriors in earthly battle slain,
By their valour and their virtue walk the bright ethereal plain.

They have cast their earthly bodies, crossed the radiant gates of
Heaven,

For to win celestial mansions unto mortals it is given."¹

The similarity of the whole legend to the previous ones and to the Triad ceremony is obvious, and its significance is increased by the fact that the Mahabharata was used by the Brahmins as a vehicle for teaching some of their highest mystical doctrine, as is shown in the Bhagugita. We have already pointed out the three gates, and the bridge is also clear. This is the bridge which links Paradise with Heaven, although it appears to span Hell, which, according to the Hindus, is an illusion.

The Mahabharata is a work of mixed date. Some parts of it go back to

¹From the translation by Romesh C. Dutt, pub. in the Everyman Series. Unfortunately the translator omits almost all the account of the journey, which may be found in the translation by Protap Chandra Roy. 1888.

the very dawn of Indian History and others may be later than the beginning of the Christian Dispensation. The exact date of that portion which covers the great journey cannot be decided, but it is almost certainly previous to the present era. Our reason for thinking so is the prominence given to Indra as King of Heaven, for at a later date Indra was practically displaced by Shiva or Vishnu, or one of the latter's incarnations, such as Krishna, who, if the journey were a late addition, would certainly have played a far more prominent part in Heaven, particularly as he had been a close friend of the heroes. It should be noted that just as Æneas enters the Underworld after the burial of an old comrade, so does Yudishthira, but in this case it is the god Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu, the Preserver, who has just passed to the Great Beyond. As Vishnu is the Sun in its preservative aspect, and Lord of the South, we see that there is really a close association between the journey of Yudishthira and that of the Sun, and since Vishnu had also absorbed the attributes of the old Vegetation God of corn and water, we perceive that the Indian beliefs run along the same lines as do those of the Mysteries. Krishna represents the Preserver in his aspect of the god-man who dies and rises again. He tramples on the serpent of evil with his left foot, as does Horus, he is slain and goes to Heaven. Thus he fills somewhat the same position as does the hero Wan in the Hung ritual, while Yudishthira is represented in the Chinese Rite by the Candidate.

THE PARSEE BRIDGE.

There are, however, other races in India who have traditions concerning the journey of the soul after death and, in particular, of the bridge. From our standpoint the most important of these are the Parsees and the Mahomedans. The Parsees are descended from the ancient fire worshippers of Persia, and in the main their beliefs are the same as those of the great Persian kings who dominated Western Asia from the Fall of Babylon up to their own defeat by Alexander. We may, therefore, consider these beliefs as dating from not later than about 500 B.C., and thus they form an interesting link uniting India, Babylonia, and Egypt with the Classical era.

According to the Parsees, on the death of a man his relatives must rise at 4 a.m. on the third day¹ thereafter and pray fervently for him, for at that very hour he reaches the bridge which spans Hell and leads to Paradise. What exactly befalls him during the three days in which he is travelling towards the bridge is uncertain, but apparently he has to surmount various difficulties, although the great and final test takes place on the bridge itself.² This bridge is narrow, and on the crown of it the deceased is met by a woman.³ If his

¹Compare the three days in the story of Jonah and the three gates in the Hung ritual.

²This corresponds with the judgment of Osiris in the Tuat, and the weighing of the souls by the Red Youth in the Hung ritual.

³For these details I am indebted to J. Hormasji, Esq., Recorder of the High Court of Rangoon, who considers that the woman symbolises conscience.

life has been good this woman is fair and beautiful; she takes him by the hand and leads him over the remaining portion of the bridge into Paradise. If, however, his life has been evil, he is met by a hideous old hag, who hurls him over the edge of the bridge into Hell.¹

THE MAHOMMEDAN BRIDGE.

When we turn to the orthodox Mahommedan races we are faced with the fact that they think that at death men's souls sleep with their bodies until the Day of Judgment, when soul and body will be reunited and rise to face Allah, the Supreme and only Judge. In consequence, the old Underworld has become the world of the ginnns and fairies, and it is to legends connected with these non-human beings that we must look for traces of the old traditional beliefs on the subject. We shall not be disappointed if we study carefully such curious legends as that told in *The Thousand and One Nights*, where the tale of the *Queen of the Serpents* undoubtedly contains the ancient characteristics of the old conception of the Underworld.

Before considering this, however, it is desirable to show that one feature of the old tradition has nevertheless survived among the orthodox beliefs of Islam. At the Day of Judgment the souls shall rise with their bodies and, gathering from all corners of the earth, journey towards the throne of Allah. In front of Him lies the pit of Hell and across it is a single bar of iron, made red-hot by the heat of the burning pit. When the unbelievers come to this and try to cross it their feet will be burned by the red hot iron, and they will fall headlong into the seething fires of Hell, but when the true believers reach it their good deeds² will take bodily form beneath their feet, like cushions, and they will pass over unscathed.³

The old ceremony of walking the fire, which is still practised by Mahommedans in India, may now be considered as a test made in this life before the actual trial of the Last Day, like the journey taken by St. Owayne through St. Patrick's Purgatory while still alive. The ceremony, however, is no doubt an old Pagan one and still exists, quite independently, in Fiji, where the walking is across a large pit full of red hot stones,⁴ and also at certain Festivals in China. When I saw the ceremony in Rangoon, in 1915, the devotees walked along a red-hot path of burning wood, which was formed by digging a trench, a yard deep, a yard wide, and ten yards long. This was filled with lighted wood which was allowed to die down to a red glowing mass, and it was across this that the pious Mahommedans who essayed the task walked leisurely, without any

¹This bridge should be compared with the Hung bridge and also the Red-hot Bar across the pit of Hell which we meet in Mahommedan traditions, with which latter it more exactly corresponds.

²It would therefore seem that while the good deeds of unbelievers would be of no avail, even believers might perish unless they had proved the reality of their faith by good works. This incident should be compared with similar incidents in the Lancashire Like-Wake Dirge. See p. 161.

³Perhaps the grass sandals in the Hung ritual have a similar significance, for by means of them the candidate leaps over the Fiery Ditch.

⁴See illustration op. p. 110.



WALKING THE FIRE IN FIJI.

shoes on their feet. Marvellous to relate none of those whom I saw attempt the task were in the least hurt.

I was told that so long as their trust in Allah held good all was well, but if for an instant their faith wavered, at that very moment the fire burnt their feet. It is interesting to note that in Fiji if a man loses confidence, he, too, is immediately burnt, but not otherwise. As to the intensity of the heat, I can bear witness that even ten yards away from the trench it was almost more than I could bear, and it would have burnt through a pair of leather boots in a moment. So far as I could see, nothing was done to the men's feet before they started on their fiery journey, nor can I conceive of anything which would have resisted the heat sufficiently long to enable them to walk the whole length of the trench unburnt. The number of volunteers was not large in proportion to the onlookers, but I saw at least a dozen men make the journey successfully during the two hours I was watching, and I saw no failures. I have talked to many Englishmen who have witnessed this spectacle, and though they were all essentially "practical men" none could give any other explanation than that, in some inexplicable way, faith protected the devotees. It should be noted that so far as I could ascertain the volunteers were not professionals, or even Dervishes, but just ordinary lay Mahommedans. No doubt they were worked up to a high state of fanatical enthusiasm and ecstasy by the fasting, which always precedes the ceremonies which constitute Maharan, and this may explain the mystery.

In Fiji a huge pit is dug and filled with red hot stones, and it is across this fiery furnace that the devotees walk. A man who witnessed one of the ceremonies saw several men cross unhurt, and then a man who had got half-way over wavered and turned back. As soon as he did so he screamed and fell down, and although other devotees rushed in and, themselves unhurt, carried him off, he was severely, but not fatally, injured.

We cannot help feeling that the references to the fiery ditch in the Hung ritual may be a memory of some such testing of the candidate in days now long past. It is certainly significant that in some of the rituals he is still said to jump across the fiery ditch, and a brazier can be seen in front of the seat of the Master in the original painting re-produced opposite page 14 in Volume I. May it not be that two separate trials by fire and water have in these later days been amalgamated and confused? If so, the crossing of the fiery ditch would represent passing through the Underworld and the crossing of the river the passing from Paradise to Heaven. As we have previously seen that there is good reason for thinking that there was once another bridge in the ritual, the crossing of which preceded the entry into the Lodge, this possibility is deserving of careful consideration. This view is supported by the definite evidence we possess that in the *Three Dots Brotherhood* candidates have first to step over a fire and later to cross the symbolical river by the Stepping Stones.¹

¹The Chinese also have a ceremony of "walking the fire," which we shall consider carefully in Vol. III.

CHAPTER XIV.

A PERSIAN VERSION OF THE FRAMEWORK.

THE QUEEN OF THE SERPENTS.



ET us now turn to the story of the Queen of the Serpents, which concludes the fifth volume of Burton's *Thousand and One Nights*, for in it we shall find the same framework as that used in the Triad ritual. In Burton's translation, vol. 5, p. 298 to the end, is to be found a most curious and interesting group of stories collected under the above title, which deal with the adventures of Bulukiya and the story of Janshah. These have striking analogies with the Egyptian story of the Mariner who was Wrecked on the Island of the Ka, or Double. The name of the Queen of the Serpents was *Qamlaykha*, and the similarity of the last syllable to the word Ka of ancient Egypt appears to be an indication that to a large extent this story really comes from that country, though not necessarily from the exact version which we have summarised on pages 96 and 97.

There was once in days of yore a Grecian Sage called Daniel, who had an only son in his old age, who was born posthumously. A few days after his wife conceived, Daniel went a long voyage in a ship and was wrecked, and only succeeded in saving five leaves of all the books of wisdom which he had written. These he locked in a box, and gave the key to his wife, saying, "If thou bearest a son name him Hasib Karin al-Din,¹ and in due time give him these five leaves which, when he understands them, will make him the most learned man of his time." Soon after Daniel died, and the boy, who was born a few days later, grew up to be an idle youth who would not learn his books or even a trade. At length his mother apprenticed him to a party of wood cutters, and it chanced one day that they all sheltered in a cave from a storm, and while waiting for it to pass over Hasib accidentally discovered a trap-door by knocking on the ground. On opening this trap-door the party found a cistern full of bees' honey. This they collected and when the last of it was ready to bale out they lowered Hasib down into the cistern to fetch it, then shut down the trap-door on him, and left him to die. The reason for their atrocious treachery² was a desire to deprive him of the share of the money to be obtained from selling the

¹Hasib, in the translations of Trobutien and others from Von Hammer, is called *Jamasp* (Brother and Minister of the ancient Persian King, Gushtasp.)

²It is interesting to note how in many mystical dramas the hero suffers from treachery. Compare the treatment of the monks in the Triad Traditional History.

honey, so they returned to the town and reported that he had been killed by a wolf.¹

Hasib, while weeping and lamenting his fate, suddenly espied a great scorpion, which fell on him. He promptly killed it, and then began to wonder how it got there, and on carefully searching found a crevice at the top of the cistern, which he enlarged with his knife. After a time he was able to crawl through this gap into a gallery which led to a door of black iron, with a silver padlock and a key of gold. On looking through a chink in the door he perceived a great light shining, and thereupon took the key, opened the door, and went in. After a short time he came to a large lake wherein something shimmered like silver, and near to it was a hillock of green jasper on which was a throne. He presently fell asleep, to be awakened after a time by the hissing of serpents, whereupon he perceived that the empty stools were now filled with huge snakes, and that the lake was really myriads of small snakes. A serpent as big as a mule approached him, bearing on its back a tray, whereon lay another serpent which shone like crystal and whose face was as that of a woman. She told him that she was the Queen of the Serpents, offered him food as a token of safety, asked him his story, and in return told hers. According to her, there was once a pious King of the Banu Israil, in Cairo, who had a son named Bulukiya. This son succeeded him, and one day, wandering through his treasures in an inner compartment, found a door which opened into a little closet. Therein stood a column of white marble, on the top of which was a casket of ebony in which was a casket of gold, and in this a book.² "He read the book and found therein a prophecy of our Lord Mahommed and how he should be sent to this world in the latter days, and be Lord of the first prophets and the last."

The description of the prophet fired his imagination and he decided to leave his throne and devote his life to trying to find Mahommed, although the latter was not yet born. Clothing himself in an Aba gown of Goat's hair, and shod with coarse sandals, he set out from Cairo to Syria in a ship. The vessel touched at an Island, where he landed for a short time and fell asleep; on waking he found that the ship had sailed. Exploring the Island he met serpents who told him that they were the result of the boiling over of Jahannam.³ "Know, O Bulukiya, that Hell of the greatness of her boiling breatheth twice a year. Belching forth her breath in the Summer, and drawing it in the Winter. Hence the Summer's heat and the Winter's cold. When she exhalet she casteth us forth of her maw and we are drawn in again with her inhaled breath." Bulukiya asked them if they knew of Mahommed, and they answered, "Verily

¹I am indebted to Mr. G. E. W. Bridge for many helpful suggestions and notes on this story.

²This reminds us of the Book of Thoth which, according to the popular tales current in ancient Egypt, was similarly enclosed in a number of caskets. For which see Maspero.

³The Underworld, the Gehenna of the Jews, and hence the place of torment among the Mahomedans.

His name is written on the gates of Paradise, and but for Him Allah had not created the world, nor Paradise, nor Heaven, nor Hell, nor earth." This conversation only wetted the hero's appetite for more information, and as a second ship soon after touched at the Island he took passage on that, and in due course arrived at the Island of the Queen of the Serpents herself. She also knew of Mahommed, and bade him carry her salutations to him.

The hero then set out again and ultimately reached Jerusalem, where he met a learned man, *Affan*, who had found in his books of magic that whoso wore Solomon's ring could compel the obedience of all created things. He had further discovered that this ring was on Solomon's finger, and that the great King was laid in a coffin which had been miraculously transported to a place of burial beyond the seven seas. He also knew that a herb existed which if pressed and rubbed on the feet gave a man the power of walking over the seven seas, and that it could only be obtained by the help of the Queen of the Serpents. When the Sage learnt that Bulukiya knew the Island of the Queen of the Serpents his joy knew no bounds, and they decided to capture the Queen and compel her to assist them in finding what they desired. As all herbs immediately became vocal in the presence of the Queen, when they chanced to pass the spot where it was growing it betrayed its presence.

The Queen of the Serpents warned them that they would never be able to obtain the ring, for Allah had given it to Solomon and to him alone, and advised them not to take that herb but to pluck another, the property of which was that those who ate should not die until the first blast. However, the two adventurers continued their journey, traversed the seven seas, and sighted a mountain whose stones were emeralds and dust of musk. On it was a stream of running water, and near by they found a cavern shining with a great light, within which lay Solomon in robes of green silk, his right hand placed over his breast, and on his middle finger the seal ring. They repeated their conjurations and tried to take the ring, whereupon *Affan* was destroyed by a guardian serpent, with a blast of fire, and Bulukiya was only saved from a like fate by the intervention of the Angel Gabriel, who said, "Go thy ways, for the time of Mahommed's coming is yet far distant."

So Bulukiya set out to return, but lost his way in the first sea and after travelling for many nights and days came to an island, "The goodliest place abounding in space, rich in grace, a compendium of beauty, material and spiritual." Here he slept in a tree until wakened by the sound of the beasts of the ocean, who, each with a jewel in its forepaw, conversed until daybreak with the beasts of the land. In terror our hero hastened over the second sea until he came to a great mountain of magnetic stone. Here he was chased off by a panther¹ and crossed the third sea, in utter darkness, at length reaching another island, where he stayed for ten days without adventure. In like manner he passed the fourth, fifth and sixth seas, and having passed the seventh

¹ Compare with the panther which turned back Dante. See *The Divine Comedy*.

reached another island, the sixth at which he had touched in his long journey. Here he saw an apple tree whose fruit a Giant Jann, named Sharahiya, forbade him to eat, because it was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. He now reached the mainland and travelled over mountains and deserts for ten days when he came to a place where he found the armies of the good and evil Jann fighting.

He presented himself to the King of these people, *Sakhr*, and, on hearing him mention Mahommed, Bulukya asked concerning hell and other matters. The good Jann explained that there were seven hells, each placed by Allah a thousand years' journey from its neighbour:—

1. Jahannam for punishment of unrepentant transgressors
among the true believers.
2. Laza for unbelievers.
3. Jahim for Gog and Magog.
4. Sa'ir for the host of Iblis.
5. Sakar for those who neglect prayer.
6. Hatamah for Jews and Christians.
7. Hawiyah for Hypocrites.

Bulukya then asked the King to assist him to return to his native land, but the latter could only provide him with a mare to carry him to his neighbour, King Barakhiya, warning him at the same time not to cry out in the mare's face, strike her, or alight until she stopped, otherwise she would slay him.

He reached King Barakhiya in two days, although in the ordinary way it would have taken him seventy months, and stayed with him for two months, after which he continued his journey over wastes and deserts, until he reached a mountain, on the summit of which was the angel Michael with the black and white tablets of *The Perspicuous Book*. Michael questioned him and "marvelled mightily" at his story. A further journey took him to a vast meadow, traversed by seven streams and covered with beautiful trees, in one corner of which was a great tree guarded by four angels. These angels were in the likeness of a man, a wild beast, a bird and a bull, and were glorifying Allah and making intercession for the forgiveness of all creatures. Bulukya marvelled at this sight, but continued his journey until he reached the mountain of Kaf, which encompassed the world. On this he saw an angel standing, opening and closing his hands, and thereby controlling earthquakes, plagues, prosperity and famine. This angel told the traveller that near by there was another vast world, white as silver, peopled by angels who came to Kaf every Thursday night.¹

The angel also told the traveller that behind Kaf lay a range of mountains, 500 years journey long, of snow and ice, which warded off the heat of Jahannam.

¹ According to Mahomedan reckoning, this is the beginning of Friday.

In addition to this he told of forty other worlds, peopled by angels who knew not Eve or Adam, nor night nor day, but praised God unceasingly. Concerning our own world, he added that it consisted of seven shells, the last of which rested on the shoulders of an angel, who stood on a rock, which rested on a bull, which stood on a huge fish, which swam in a mighty ocean. This ocean rested on a vast abyss of air, below which was raging fire, and below the fire a mighty serpent, *Falak*, which would swallow all but for fear of the Most High.¹ God had placed Hell in the Serpent's mouth to keep until the day of Resurrection when He will send angels with chains to bring it forth. The angel then related to Bulukya the following story concerning Isa.²

Isa once asked Allah saying, "O Lord, show me the fish that I may look upon it," and the fish passed by, in the sea in which it dwelt, but Isa said:—"By Thy honour and glory, O Lord, I saw no fish, but there passed by me a great bull, whose length was three days' journey, and I know not what manner of thing this bull is." To which Allah replied, "O Isa this that thou sawest was but the head of the fish."³

Bulukya now journeyed Westward until he came to a shut gate guarded by two gatekeepers, who bore the semblance of a lion and a bull. These knew not what lay within the gates, neither would they admit anyone through them except by command of Gabriel. So the traveller supplicated Allah saying, "O Lord, send me Thy messenger Gabriel, the faithful one, to open for me this gate that I may see what lies therein." And God hearkened unto His prayer and sent the archangel to open the gate of the "Meeting place of the two seas." Bulukya entered and beheld a vast ocean, one half of which was salt and the other fresh, which he learnt was the source of all the waters in the world. He then continued his journey across this ocean, met the four archangels, who were on their way to destroy a dragon, and ultimately came to an island where he met Janshah, who told him *his* story, after which he continued his journey until he came to an island on which was an immense tree, and under it a table spread with all manner of meats, whilst on the branches above sat a wonderful bird who informed him that he was "One of the Birds of Eden who followed Adam when Allah cast him out thence." Ultimately Allah gave it the island as a dwelling place, and there every Friday night came the Saints and Princes of the Faith to eat of the meats spread by the Almighty. "After they have eaten the table is taken up again to Heaven, nor doth the food ever waste or corrupt."

¹Compare the Midgard Serpent of the Norse Mythology.

²Isa-ben Mirian or Jesus, Son of Mary. He whom the Christians do call Jesus Christ. Mahommed always speaks of Him as a great teacher, and even admits the Virgin Birth, but denies that He was the Son of God.

³A most curious story and difficult to explain, but it certainly seems to indicate a series of initiations whose full meaning could only be appreciated by those sufficiently spiritually evolved. Isa had apparently only obtained spiritually to the 3^d in the series, and therefore the fourth degree of the Fish told him no more than he already knew. There is no doubt also a Zodiacal reference.

So Bulukya ate his fill of the meats and praised Allah.¹ Then there came unto him Al-Khizr who promised that if Allah gave permission he would bear him to Cairo in a moment, otherwise it would take him five and ninety years. When Bulukya had prayed to Allah, Al-Khizr declared that he had received the requisite permission and bade him "Take fast hold of me with both thy hands and shut thine eyes," Al-Khizr stepped only a single step forward and then said, "Open thine eyes," and lo, Bulukya was at his palace door at Cairo, and the prophet had vanished.

Subsequently Bulukya tried to obtain from the Queen of the Serpents the herb² which "Whoso crusheth and drinketh the juice thereof sickeneth not, neither groweth grey nor dies," but she knew not where to find it. This completes the story of Bulukya, but the narrative continues and relates how Hasib saved the life of Karazdan, King of Persia, by healing him of leprosy, and in consequence became his Wazir, and how the Queen of the Serpents died.

THE MEANING OF THE STORY.

Now what does this tangled mass of fable mean? It is clear that we have in it a distorted and little understood account of some old tradition of the journey of the Soul through the Underworld, which was not intelligible to the Arab story-teller whose version appears in the *Thousand and One Nights*. Whence he had inherited it, it is difficult to say, but it is quite possible that it is a distorted memory of some initiation Rite, and if we disregard some of the embroideries, probably added at a later date by sensation-mongers, we find the same framework as in all these other legends, but adapted to orthodox Mahommedan belief. This fact is important, as it shows that at one time the story had been understood by some Mahommedan Sage, who had brought it into conformity with orthodox Mahommedan conceptions of the hereafter. The tale itself seems originally to have been Persian. The essential factor here is that in the mysterious worlds he describes there are no living human beings, only angels or genii; even King Solomon sleeps his age-long sleep and cannot be awakened. This is in conformity with the Muslim belief that after death men sleep in complete unconsciousness until the day of Judgment. Therefore the traveller cannot see any people in the Underworld, they will only come to Heaven or Paradise after the Day of Judgment, but he is permitted to learn something of the places prepared beforehand for the reception of the dead, and of the non-human beings who inhabit them.

No doubt before the legend passed into Mahommedan keeping the traveller found human beings there, and it would have been easier for us to have com-

¹Here we have the Celestial banquet which invariably terminates the journey of the bold adventurer in these stories, followed by his safe return to earth. Compare with the humble little feast of Yoonecara, consisting of a carpet snake, in the Australian legend, and his happy dismissal by Blame.

²Compare with the herb which Gilgamesh found and lost.

pared this system with that which was supposed to exist among other races. Even still, however, we can trace the main landmarks:—

1. Hasib enters into the grave and passes into a new and strange world, presided over by the Queen of the Serpents, who corresponds very closely with the serpent Guardians of the Egyptian Underworld and the Naga folk of India. We can afford to ignore the transference of his adventures to an apparently different person, Bulukya, who may, indeed, be the same man, who receives a new name after death, a not unusual custom among some races, e.g., among the Zulus.

2. The Island of Serpents brings to mind the Island of the Ka in the Egyptian story. This island is apparently at the mouth of Hell, and it is noticeable that Bulukya has reached it by ship, implying that it is the strand which leads down into the Underworld.

3. The cave wherein Solomon lies is the Gate of the Underworld, where it will be noted that Bulukya's companion is destroyed, because his motives were unworthy. No man can pass through the Underworld in safety unless his faith be high, his heart pure, and his purpose noble.

4. The Boat of the Sun has been replaced by the Magic Herb which enables him to traverse the waters of the Underworld. He did not really recross the sea by which he had come to the cave of King Solomon, although he thought he did, he was traversing the Underground River of Ocean, as is shown by the statement that he lost his way, and by the entirely different objects which he saw. In his journey along this underground river he skirted the middle kingdom of the Underworld and saw the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, which is depicted in Hell in the fresco at Chaldron, Surrey.^(a) This in itself is sufficient to show where he really was.

5. Any doubt on this point is set at rest by the fight between the good and evil Janns and the description of the pit of Hell.

6. After passing the pit of Hell he journeys through desolate lands, representing the Eastern half of the Middle Land of the Underworld, and reaches the Mountain of the Dawn, where he finds Michael on guard.

7. The next place to which he comes, namely, the vast Meadow with the four angelic Beasts glorifying Allah, is the Earthly Paradise.

8. He ascends the Mountain of the Dawn, or Kaf, and from it sees other worlds, and in the distance the Heavens themselves. This is represented by the Vast World, white as silver, peopled by angels. The information given by the angel of the mountain, though of interest as showing the Cosmogony as understood by the Mahommedans, can be ignored, except that it may be the remnants of an inner degree given at this point in the Mystical Journey, if this was at one time an Initiation ceremony.

9. The Vast Sea is, of course, the Sea of Clouds, beneath which is the terrestrial River of Ocean, as viewed from the Mountain of the Dawn. These

^(a) See illus. op. page 180.

lay between the traveller and Heaven itself which rested on the top of the Mountain of the Gods. Here we should expect to find the rainbow bridge, and in the Gates guarded by the two gate keepers, who seem to represent Taurus and Leo, we have a remembrance of the Gate which according to the Norse tradition closed in the lower end of the rainbow bridge. The Magic herb, however, serves the same purpose, and it will be noted that Bulukyia passes the four great Archangels who are going to destroy an evil dragon at the command of Allah, which dragon, we learn, they will cast into Jehannam.

10. Finally the traveller reached the Isle of the Blest, where he partook of Celestial food and met a strange Celestial being, who seems to be a man and yet more than a man. It is noteworthy that only by miraculous aid is he able to return to earth.

Thus we see that, despite the mass of fanciful detail which has been added by later story tellers, the ancient landmarks can still be traced, and it is a noteworthy fact that this is the only story of its kind in the whole of the *Nights*, it being in many ways quite different from all the others. I have thought it well to devote considerable space to it as indicating the survival of this ancient tradition even in the Mahomedan world, where the doctrine that the dead sleep till judgment day might be expected entirely to have destroyed it. So far as I am aware this is the first attempt to explain this fantastic story, which has been the despair of most commentators on *The Thousand and One Nights*. Lane went so far as to omit it altogether on the plea that it was such a fantastic jumble of rubbish that it was not worth translating. I am glad to say that Paine and Burton thought otherwise, but even they seem to have missed its real importance. In some ways I regard it as the most valuable of all the stories contained in that monumental collection.

With regard to Initiation Rites it must not be forgotten that even to-day there are Initiation Rites working in Arabia, particularly among the Dervishes, which bear striking similarities with Freemasonry. Sir Richard Burton was himself initiated into one of them, and I have seen and handled his certificate of membership. In *Freemasonry and the Ancient Gods* I have given a fairly full account of one of these Initiation Rites, and in view of these facts the possibility that this story is the garbled remnant of another Rite of Initiation, corresponding to the Masonic Higher degrees, or to the Triad Ritual, cannot be ignored.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SOLAR BARQUE IN SYRIAN RITES.



HIS survival of the ancient tradition among the Mahommedans despite fourteen hundred years of the teaching of orthodox Islam is of peculiar interest to us in the present chapter. There is little doubt that the story of the *Queen of the Serpents* is all that is left in *The Thousand and One Nights* of the beliefs on this subject which were once current throughout the whole of the Near East, and of which we obtain some of the earliest traces in the Story of Jonah. Since, moreover, many later European versions of this journey can probably be traced back to a Syrian origin, we may not unreasonably consider that the legend of Jonah is the earliest form of that Syrian tradition which, to a large extent, coloured the beliefs of thoughtful men in the West concerning the great problem as to what befalls the soul at death. Whether the Jonah legend is indigenous to Palestine or is but a Syrian version of an Egyptian, or a Babylonian belief it is impossible to say, but one thing is clear, the great trade routes between further Asia and Western Europe inevitably ran through Syria and Palestine, and if the tradition of the Hung Boat and the Journey of the Soul to the Isle of the Blest did not evolve independently in China, then it was almost certainly via Syria that this tradition travelled until it reached that country.

If we take the association of the name Jonah, meaning a Dove, with the fact that he is said to have come from Harran, a place sacred to the Moon, where the dove might not be sacrificed, we obtain a key to the situation, and shall conclude that Jonah represents the Moon, which is invisible for three days at the end of the lunar month. As astrologically the Moon is said to control the soul, and the Sun, the spirit, we shall understand how it comes about that the supposed swallowing of the moon by a mythical fish, or monster, would ultimately lead to an allegory depicting the journey of the soul through the Underworld, limited in time to three days, the period during which the moon was invisible. Such an allegory would also explain why the dove would itself become a symbol for the soul, as already mentioned in the chapter on the Willow Pattern Plate. On the other hand, the explanation adopted by some savants, that Jonah represents the sun, a view supported by the passage in Sadi's *Gulistan*, quoted later, would still convey an allegory of the Journey of the Soul through the Underworld. Thus whichever interpretation the reader prefers makes no

difference to the main thesis, which is that the Jonah story is an allegory, and probably an Initiation Rite, teaching of the Journey of the Soul.^(a)

Before actually considering the story itself it is worth noting that several examples of people being swallowed alive by a huge fish, and ultimately coming forth again, and in one case at least the ship also is swallowed, occur in *The Ocean of Story*, edited by Mr. N. M. Penzer, which shows that the myth is widespread. We should not, therefore, hastily assume that all these stories have sprung from the same source. They may have evolved separately among different races, from their observation of certain natural phenomena. In this connection it is worth mentioning that the Chippewa Indians have a story of a man who was swallowed by a great fish and subsequently came forth alive^(b).

As I have pointed out in a previous work^(c), wherein the story was considered from a somewhat different aspect, the adventures of Jonah have always been a matter for speculation, but one factor has at all times been acknowledged by the Church authorities, namely, that Jonah was the prototype of Christ, for just as Christ lay for three days in the tomb and came forth alive, so in like manner Jonah lay in the belly of the whale¹ for three days and then came forth again into the light. This fact is of the utmost importance, for it supports the view now widely held by scholars that the story is an allegory of the Journey of the Soul through the Underworld, and possibly is a distorted account of initiation ceremonies once practised in Phœnicia and Syria, which taught of a life beyond the grave.² If we compare Isaiah we shall^(d) see that the resurrection of the dead is associated with the destruction by God of Leviathan and the dragon that is in the sea.

THE STORY OF JONAH.

According to the authorised version of the Bible^(e) the story is briefly as follows:—

Jonah was told to go to Ninevah and warn its citizens that the wrath of God was kindled against it because of its iniquities, but was afraid to do so, and decided to flee to Tarshish. He took boat³ at Joppa and paid the fare thereof.⁴ The Lord thereupon raised a great storm and the sailors prayed to

¹It is popularly called a whale, but the Bible does not say so, and merely calls it a great fish.

²I must express my indebtedness to Mr. N. M. Penzer for much valuable help on this subject and especially for drawing my attention to Simpson's *The Jonah Legend*, in which that author produces strong arguments in support of the view that it was a Rite of Initiation. See also Note on Jonah in *The Ocean of Story*, Vol. II. p. 192-194.

³The Boat of the Soul or of the Sun, which should be compared with the Hung Boat.

⁴The fact that this is carefully recorded is significant. It indicates a belief that the dead had to pay a fee to the Gatekeeper or ferryman of the Underworld, and secondly it suggests an initiation fee. See also Chap. XI, p. 92, note 5.

(a) J. S. M. Ward. *Who was Hiram Abiff?* pp. 119 sq.

(b) W. C. Judd, *Wigwam Stories* .p. 289.

(c) *Who Was Hiram Abiff?* p. 119 sq.

(d) Isaiah. Ch. 26, 19; Ch. 27, 1.

(e) Jonah, Chaps. 1 and 2.

their gods to save them. They were astonished to find Jonah asleep in the hold¹ instead of praying, and discovered that he was the cause of the wrath of God. He advised them to fling him into the sea and ultimately they did so, whereupon the storm ceased.²

Jonah, however, instead of being drowned, was swallowed by a great fish and remained for three days in its belly. While there he prayed and said:—

"I cried by reason of my affliction unto the Lord and He heard me; Out of the Belly of Hell³ cried I, and Thou heardest my voice." He further said,

"I went down to the bottom of the mountains,⁴ the earth with her bars was about me for ever; yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord, my God. . . ."

"And the Lord spake unto the fish and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land."

After this he was again ordered to go to Ninevah, and obeyed. The final scene wherein he sojourned beneath a booth under a gourd, which subsequently withered, is clearly allegorical.⁵

When we come to consider the story the conviction grows upon us that it must be an allegory of the Journey of the Soul through the Underworld. Indeed, Chapter II seems to be an explanation of the allegory, so that no one should be in any doubt. Although it is given as a prayer it appears to be a record of past events, for Jonah says:—

"I cried . . . and He heard me. Out of the belly of Hell cried I and thou heardest my voice."

We learn from this account that the soul on its journey after death was supposed to pass by mountains and to be shut in by bars. These are the Mountains of Sunset which were believed to stand like twin pillars on the Western edge of the world, and between them the Sun passed out of the sight of men on earth into the Underworld. The setting of the sun often causes bars of light and darkness to appear in the West, which would quite naturally be regarded as the bars of the Gates which shut in the denizens of that place. The statement that God, "brought up my life from corruption," brings to mind certain prayers in the Egyptian *Book of the Dead* which ask that the deceased may not see (or experience) corruption of the body.

¹Like the Hung Heroes.

²It is possible that herein there is a hint that not everyone could travel in the Boat of the Sun but that some, and more particularly the wicked, had to journey through the Underworld on foot for the purpose of purification, and therefore the Solar Barque had to throw overboard sinners when journeying through the Underworld.

³This proves almost conclusively that the belly is the Underworld. The word translated Hell means Underworld, and not necessarily the Place of the Damned.

⁴Compare the Mountains of Sunset in other Rites. The bars of the earth would be the gates of the Underworld, which is also symbolised by the Fish's mouth. The Chinese speak of the Buddhist hells as earth-prisons.

⁵Compare this with the statement in some versions of the Triad ritual that the Five Founders met together in the Red Flower Pavilion, under a peach tree. Note also that gourds, or calabashes are hung up over the gates in a Triad Lodge, perhaps because the gourd is an emblem of the Immortals.



SYMBOLIC USE OF THE SQUARE AND COMPASSES AMONG THE CHINESE.
(Fu Hsi and His Consort; the Reputed Founder of the Chinese State).

When we turn to consider the three days, we are forcibly reminded of the three stages, or gates, which occur in other journeys, and are justified in believing that during these days the souls had similarly to submit to three tests. These three days also occur in the Christian story, as, according to the Apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, during them our Lord broke down the Gates of Hell, which were of *iron and brass*, rescued the souls which were in bondage, and led them into Paradise. He then came forth by day, on Easter Day, and subsequently ascended into Heaven (not Paradise).

On these similarities some critics might base the argument that the Christian story is merely a restatement of old beliefs, and has no foundation in fact, but this is too hasty an assumption, and another explanation is just as reasonable and probably more acceptable to most. God teaches man by the methods most suited to achieve His objects, and if certain beliefs were well founded is it not natural that Christ should conform to them? We are specifically informed that He fulfilled the prophecies, and there is no reason why we should assume that the prophecies must be restricted to those current among the Jews. Moreover, from the story of Jonah we see that very similar beliefs concerning the Underworld were current among them as among the neighbouring nations. We have already stated previously that many able students consider that the story of Jonah is an allegory of the Sun's descent at evening into the sea and its rising therefore the following day, and a passage in Sadi's *Gulistan* shows that this belief was held by many thoughtful men in the East. The passage is:—

"Now that the first watch of the night was gone, the disc of the sun was withdrawn into the shade and Jonah had stepped into the fish's mouth."^(a)

We thus see that from one standpoint Jonah typifies the soul, under the emblem of a dove, and from another the Sun, but as the souls were supposed to accompany the Sun on its journey in the Solar Barque there is no real conflict of opinion. It will be remembered that the colours of the signals of the Hung Boat are said to be red, which among the Chinese is the colour of the Sun. Let us now summarise the essential Hung details found in the legend. We find the Sacred Mountain leading to the Gate of the Underworld, and the three Gates are represented by the three days in the belly of the whale. We also have the coming forth by day into Paradise represented by the dry land, and finally, the arrival at a City, here called Ninevah. With regard to Ninevah, it is clear that this City has replaced some other City, and that the message of wrath is probably a Jewish insertion. For all that in the Jewish records, unlike Egypt or Babylon, which symbolise the Kingdom of Darkness, Ninevah, although a heathen city, has no evil reputation attached to it, and in the legend itself it repents and is not destroyed. We may therefore suspect that there is also a mystical meaning woven into the original allegory and that Ninevah represents the human heart, which the mystical journey purges from sin, and

(a) A famous Persian work translated by Sir R. Burton and published in 1888.

turns from an evil place to a City beloved of God. Be that as it may, there is no historic evidence of the conversion of Ninevah, nor is it usual in the Bible to find God sending messages of warning to heathen cities. As a rule these warnings were reserved for His chosen people, and in particular for Jerusalem.

The Jonah story is, however, of considerable importance as it shows that the people of Syria had similar beliefs to the Babylonians and Egyptians concerning the fate of the soul, and is thus one more link in the chain connecting the Triad rituals of China with a certain Masonic Higher Degree in Great Britain. The fact that the Phœnicians were a sea-faring race is no doubt one reason why the Boat of the Soul, which seems to have been lost among the Romans, survived in the Jonah story. It will be noted that there is no suggestion of a bridge in this legend, but since two bridges occur in the version transmitted to us by Lucian we shall probably be right in assuming that the Jonah legend as we now have it is not complete, and that Lucian's story more truly reflects popular beliefs. This latter version is to us of supreme importance, for Lucian's works were not unknown in Mediæval times and we have reason for suspecting that the Voyage of St. Brendon is a monkish version, evolved directly or indirectly from the *Vera Historia*.

LUCIAN'S ACCOUNT OF THE JOURNEY OF THE SOLAR BARQUE.¹

Although Lucian says that he called his book the True History because it contained nothing but lies, it is to be feared that he himself was not quite accurate in this statement. While professing to write a parody on the wonderful stories told by contemporary travellers and historians, to a large extent his work consists of poking fun at old myths and current beliefs. Here and there we can detect sections which are pure invention, and which aim at making more ridiculous the old legends with which he was dealing, but in some cases the statements he laughs at are, for all that, true; as, for example, the frozen sea and the forest in the Ocean, which latter is merely a Mangrove swamp, such as exists off the West coast of Africa. In like manner the great continent beyond the Ocean, which he called *Antipodes*, is probably a tradition of the land mass which was later rediscovered and called America.

In the case of the first island visited, wherein he says he found footprints of Hercules, we have a perfectly recognisable description of Madeira, namely, "a steep wooded island." As to the giant footprints, visitors to Ceylon are still shown a gigantic footprint called *Adam's footprint* on Adam's Peak. The Buddhists, however, call it *Buddha's footprint*, and so-called castes or models of this footprint are to be seen in many Pagodas in Burma. I saw one

¹In *Who Was Hiram Abiff?* I have dealt with Lucian's Journey in connection with the story of Jonah, but it is essential that it should also appear in this book, not only because many readers will not have seen the previous work, but also because it is necessary to this thesis in that it bears on the Hung ritual. Those who have read my former work will at once perceive that the subject is now viewed from an entirely different aspect, although the actual story itself obviously must be the same.

at the Shwe Dagon Pagoda, Rangoon, which was over 6 feet long, and since similar castes exist in India, which are called *Footprints of Vishnu*, it is clear that this one was a relic of some ancient myth or custom. It is not possible here to discuss the origin or meaning of these objects, but their existence shows that there was a solid basis for the wild story of the foot-prints of Hercules and Dionysius, even though Lucian makes fun of them. Although as a rule he shows scant respect for the ancient beliefs he ridicules, Lucian shows a peculiar reverence in his treatment of the Isles of the Blest, wherein his description fits in fairly accurately with contemporary Classical beliefs.

His book, however, is of the greatest importance to us, for, as already suggested, it is one of the probable links whereby the ancient beliefs, traditions, and legends of Asia were transmitted to the Middle Ages, and so down to us. Whether, indeed, St. Brendon's Voyage was borrowed direct from the *Vera Historia* by Monkish scribes and somewhat spiritualised, or whether it is a Christianised version of the old Initiation Ceremony, one thing is certain. Both are descendants of the Syrian Initiatory Rite of the Solar Barque and the great Monster who swallows the candidates. It seems, indeed, as if the original framework went Westward and became Christianised; Eastward, and became the foundation of the ritual of the Hung Society in China; and found an abiding place in the Mahabharata in India. It will also be seen that it has striking analogies with beliefs and rites current in New Guinea and among the Yaos of Nyasaland, although the alternative theory is possible, namely, that these various rites and beliefs all owe their origin to some very primitive form of the ceremony which has long since perished, and have since evolved separately, without interchange of ideas.

THE VOYAGE.

Lucian set sail in a boat Westward into the great Ocean and came first to a steep, woody island, covered with trees, where he saw the foot-prints of Hercules and Dionysius. Soon after his ship was caught by a whirlwind and carried up to the Moon,¹ where the travellers found a fierce war in progress between the men of the Moon and those of the Sun, concerning the right to colonise the planet Lucifer, i.e., Venus.

The boat then returned to this world and almost immediately was swallowed up whole by a huge sea-monster, or whale. At first all was dark inside, but when the whale opened its mouth the travellers saw that there was land formed out of the sediment which the monster had swallowed, and thereon

¹Here we obtain a reference to the conflict between the Moon and the Sun over Venus which occurs in many Asiatic legends. Its chief importance to us lies in the fact that after having come into touch with the moon the boat returns to earth and almost immediately is swallowed by the whale. This reminds us of the fact that Jonah is said to have come from Haran, a City sacred to the Moon.

was a forest and even signs of cultivation.¹ They next made a fire by friction with fire-sticks² and began to explore the belly of the whale. To their surprise they found an old man and a boy, both Greeks, who, like them, had been swallowed alive. The old man had built himself a hut and had cultivated the soil, but complained that the original inhabitants of the whale's belly, semi-human, semi-animal monsters of a most repulsive type, oppressed him sorely.³ He asked Lucian and his companions to help him to resist them, and, as a result, a series of battles took place on *three* successive days, which resulted in the complete extermination of the monsters.⁴ In order to escape from the whale's belly they set fire to the forest inside it, which killed the animal, and they then got their ship out undamaged through the monster's mouth, into the daylight.⁵

The ship sailed on over a sea of ice and amid various strange adventures, which are probably interpolated here and have nothing to do with the initiation rite, but at length we pick up the theme once more, for the vessel reached the "Isles of the Blest." The first adventure there was their arrest and arraignment before the King of the Island, *Rhadamanthus the Judge of the Dead*.⁶ They were charged with having trespassed on the Isles of the Blest before their due time, being living men, but were graciously acquitted and allowed to stay there awhile. Then follows a description of the City, wherein he dwells with tender and poetic language on the walls of gold and emerald and the gates of cinnamon: on the streets, which were paved with ivory, on the Temple built of beryl, and on the altars formed of solid amethyst. The happy inhabitants neither grow old nor die, and there is neither night nor day, but they dwell in the soft twilight of the dawn in an eternal Spring. The meadows are filled with the fragrance of countless lovely flowers; the orchards are full of fruits, and the rivers flow with milk, wine and honey.⁷ Suddenly, however,

¹In other words, they were in the Underworld. Perhaps the darkness implies that the eyes of the initiates were bandaged and subsequently uncovered, as denoted by the statement that "the whale opened its mouth."

²A very old and magical ceremony. The ordinary method at this period was by flint and steel, and the specific mention of the ancient method implies that it was a religious rite in which metals might not be used.

³These represent the demons of the Underworld.

⁴Here we have a distorted account of three days testing of the initiates, who probably had to pass through three miniature battles and gain entry into three chambers, just as the Hung Heroes have to pass through the three gates after satisfying the armed guards who challenge them at each.

⁵This represents the coming forth by day, while the use of fire to effect it suggests the passing through or near a fire, which often marks the termination of primitive initiation rites. It may be that the fiery furnace in the Hung ritual represents a former testing by fire, as well as the fires of Hell which such a testing would symbolise.

⁶This incident reminds us of what befell a certain traveller as related in a degree now working in England, except that their chains, we are told, were of roses, whilst his were of a much more business-like material. The incident really represents the trial of the dead and should be compared with the trial of the Egyptian Dead before Osiris, who, like Rhadamanthus, lay peculiar stress on Truth, and with the arrival of the Hung Heroes in the Hall of Fidelity and Loyalty.

⁷This description should be compared with that of the City of Willows in the Hung ritual. There we not only get the orchards, and other agricultural delights, but are told that the Master Buddha sits enshrined in a temple built of gold and gems.

he seems to remember that he is a hardened old cynic, and, to save his reputation, relates a humorous story of an intrigue between the much loved Helen and another hero, which ultimately led to their expulsion from Paradise.

Their next visit was to the Isles of the Damned, and in order to reach the City of Punishment they had to cross a bridge over a ditch full of fire guarded by Timon.¹ Even Lucian does not venture to laugh at the anguish of the lost. The remainder of the story contains many curious features, some of which are undoubtedly connected with initiation rites, thus at one point the mast of the ship buds, and vines and ivy cover it.² Finally, they had to pass over a mysterious bridge of water, which spanned a pit in the ocean itself, and ultimately arrived at the Continent of the Antipodes. Here, unfortunately, the narrative breaks off and we are left in complete darkness as to how the bold adventurers managed to return to Greece and so enable their story to be written down by Lucian.

From the above it is clear that in the *Vera Historia* Lucian has embedded many details of the mythology of his time, and among them a rite of initiation. This took the form of being symbolically swallowed by a monster and being spewed forth therefrom, in order that the candidate might have dramatically depicted to him the fate of the good and bad after death, and so learn of the resurrection and of the life of the world beyond. Even to-day in New Guinea the boys are supposed to be swallowed by a monster, which consists of a house made in the form of a huge beast, the door constituting its jaws, and after many trials they come forth once more at the mouth as fully initiated men.^(a) This ceremony clearly reflects the beliefs held in that country as to what befalls a man after death, as set out in Chapter VII.

This swallowing by a monster is not entirely forgotten in the Hung ritual for, as we have already mentioned, the names of the initiates are written inside the mouth of a tiger, which is painted on a board. There are, indeed, numerous similarities between this account and the chief incidents in the Hung ceremony. The three days fight corresponds with the three Gates; the Isles of the Blest need no further comment, while the City of Rhadamanthus, although placed in the Isles of the Blest, really represents the City of Willows. The fact that Lucian subsequently visits the Isles of the Damned is an exact parallel to the procedure in the Hung ritual, where the candidate after he has been duly received as a member is shown the fiery furnace, guarded by the Red Youth, or Red Guard. Perhaps, however, the most striking fact is the appearance of the two bridges. In those accounts of the Underworld which are most complete there appear to be three bridges, of which one leads from earth into the world below; one often

¹Compare with the fiery ditch and the bridge in the Hung ritual. This will be discussed in detail later.

²This refers to an incident in the story of Dionysius. See *Who Was Hiram Abiff?* p. 88.

³This is the bridge which leads from Paradise to Heaven.

(a)See *Who Was Hiram Abiff?* p. 208.

spans the Pit of Hell and leads to Paradise, whilst the third links Paradise with the Holy City and is usually reserved for the Gods alone. The latter is represented in Lucian's story by the Bridge of Water which leads to the Antipodes. The other two bridges seem to be combined by him, for the bridge into the City of the Damned suggests that which *leads* into the Underworld and also that which *spans* the Pit of Hell. In the Hung ritual all three bridges appear, although they have become somewhat confused and at times there seem to be only two, but as the whole subject is gone into very fully in Volume III it need not detain us now.



AN ENGRAVED GEM OF THE 4TH CENTURY
CONTAINING THE STORY OF JONAH AND THE
SIGN OF FIRE.

CHAPTER XVI.

ULYSSES AND ÆNEAS IN THE MANSIONS OF THE DEAD.



LUCIAN is of interest to us because his account suggests a blending of old Syrian beliefs with those of Classical Greece and Rome, and because he has undoubtedly influenced some of the monkish writers of the Middle Ages. Many of the greatest mediæval writers on the fate of the soul after death seem, however, to ignore Lucian and to draw their inspiration mainly from Virgil, who in his turn was undoubtedly influenced by the traditions of Greece and, more especially, of Homer. It must not be forgotten that Virgil was one of the few Classical authors who was never lost sight of by mediæval scholars, although in their hands he appears rather as a master of magic, and the reputed author of many ghost stories, than as the great Poet of the Golden Age of Roman literature. For all that, it is not Virgil the Magician, but Virgil the writer of the *Æneid* who inspired Dante, and others who, like him, wrote on the subject of the after-life. For these reasons the beliefs of the Greeks and Romans are of considerable importance to us in this study since they are a definite link in the chain which connects certain high degrees current in the West to-day with a long forgotten past, wherein our ancestors evolved ideas concerning the Underworld very similar to those still taught in the Hung Ritual.

The Greek conception of the Underworld seems at first to have been hazy and unsubstantial, and only crystallised in the course of ages into the clear-cut image revealed in Virgil, who based his Underworld on beliefs common to Greeks and Romans. The earliest authentic account is that given in Book XI of Homer's *Odyssey*,^(a) but it must be admitted that it is far from satisfactory. Ulysses raised the phantoms of the dead in much the same spirit that the modern spiritualist calls up some departed friend. He wanted to get a prophecy as to his future fate on earth and to see his old friends, but he hardly asked them a single question concerning their life in the Underworld or what that place was like.

THE JOURNEY OF ULYSSES.

Instructed by Circe, Ulysses sailed in his ship¹ across the Ocean till he reached a shore

"where grow the poplar groves,
And fruitless willows² wan of Proserpine."

¹Perhaps this is a faint suggestion of the boat of the Souls.

²Their association with the Underworld is of peculiar interest to us, seeing that in the Triad Ritual the Heavenly City is called the City of Willows.

(a) For a good and inexpensive translation see that by Wm. Cooper in the Everyman Series.

He then entered a river, which he calls "the Deep,"¹ and saw the city of the Cimerians, which was wreathed in clouds and darkness, on whom the sun never deigned to look.² Having landed, they continued the journey along the side of the Underground River (or Ocean) until they came to the spot indicated by Circe, and here Ulysses opened a trench with his sword, "ell-broad on every side." Into this he poured libations. (1) Honey; (2) Wine; (3) Water; (4) "Sprinkling Meal over all." He next vowed various offerings to the Shades if he returned safely to Ithaca, including a barren heifer³ and a black ram, and then invoked the spirits of the dead. After this he slew a ram and a sable ewe, turning the face of each "right towards Erebus" and letting their blood flow into the trench. The dead swarmed out of Erebus and crowded round the offerings, but at first Ulysses would not let them touch the blood. Meanwhile he cut up the two victims and burned them, offering prayers to Pluto and to Proserpine.

First came to him one of his comrades, Elpenor, who had not yet been buried, and implored him to carry out the needful ceremonies which the King promised to do.⁴ Next came his mother, but she did not speak, and then the prophet Tiresias, who bade him withdraw his guarding sword and let him drink the blood, so that he could tell Ulysses the truth.⁵

Tiresias then told him that despite unexpected hardships he would at length reach Ithaca. After this Ulysses learnt that no Shade could speak to him until it had drunk of the blood. He therefore in turn allowed all those with whom he wished to speak to drink, including his mother, whose previous silence had puzzled him. He found that the Ghosts were unsubstantial and

¹The Underground River of Ocean, which is clearly to be distinguished from the River of Ocean above ground in the narrative. Ulysses went from the one into the other, and apparently landed on the beach of the Underworld and there dug his trench.

²This statement shows that it was in the Underworld and is the prototype of Dis and of Hellheim. Ulysses saw it in the distance from the *Infernal Shore*, but he was far too cautious to attempt to enter it. Instead he summoned the shades to him. Ulysses was essentially practical, he wanted to find out how soon it would be before he would reach home, and had no intention of rushing into unnecessary danger merely to satisfy his curiosity. Though brave enough, he had no longing for knowledge for its own sake.

³Compare the sacrifice of *Æneas*. A barren heifer was offered because no new life could spring up in the region of the Dead. Note the use of black for the Infernal Goddess in this and other similar cases, and compare with the Hung Sacrifice of a black ox.

⁴Compare the like incident in the *Æneid*, where the desperate anxiety of the ghost is explained by the fact that until buried properly none could cross from the shore to the mainland of the Underworld, but had to wander hopelessly up and down on the strand.

⁵Elpenor not having yet entered the real kingdom of Pluto could speak for he was still partly physical, but the others could not until they had drunk the blood, which was popularly supposed to contain the life of the victims. Thus strengthened they obtained sufficient materiality for the time to be able to speak to a mortal. Compare the drinking of the cock's blood in the Hung ceremony. It is worth noting that if a mortal visits the Underworld and partakes of the food thereof he cannot return to this physical plane, and here we have an example of the reverse process, whereby denizens of the Underworld can only communicate with the living after they have partaken of earthly food. The tradition that vampires can maintain a precarious existence on this earth by drinking the blood of a human being is a direct analogy with the procedure of Ulysses.

could neither touch nor embrace him, that life in the Underworld was dark and dreary, and that for the most part the spirits seemed to grieve over their earthly past. The Ghost of Achilles bluntly said:—

"I had rather live
The servile hind for hire, and eat the bread
Of some man scantily himself sustained
Than Sovereign Empire hold o'er all the Shades"^{a1}

The chief anxiety of the dead was to learn what was happening in the world above, and particularly to obtain news of their friends and relations. Ulysses next saw Minos, Judge of the Dead, and how the dead came before him

"filling the house,
Whose spacious folding gates are never closed."^{b)}

He then witnessed the sufferings of some of the worst sinners, among them being Tityus, who was fastened to the ground² and on whose entrails two vultures preyed. He next saw Tantalus, who stood in a pool of clean water up to his chin, but as soon as he bent his head to drink it the water vanished and fruit trees appeared over his head, full of luscious fruit. As soon as the unfortunate man raised his head to eat these they vanished in their turn, and the clear water returned. Thus though consumed with hunger and thirst he was never able to satisfy either. Then Ulysses noticed Sisyphus, trying to push a great boulder up a hill, which as soon as it reached the top rolled back again.

After these horrors Hercules appeared, but Ulysses learnt that it was only his semblance,³ for the real soul of the Hero was with the Immortal Gods and shared their Celestial Banquet. Nevertheless, this semblance told Ulysses of his earthly adventures, and in particular of how he carried off Cerberus and then sent it back again to Hell. Then the shade returned to "the abode of Pluto." At length, however, Ulysses's nerves could no longer stand the strain of the gibbering ghosts which crowded round the trench and he and his companions fled back to the ship. They sailed down the river into the Earthly Ocean, and so back to the Isle of Circe.⁴ We also learn from this account that the female souls were under the jurisdiction of Proserpine and the male souls under Pluto, and Ulysses, like a true knight, let the ladies drink first.

¹ A similar attitude to that revealed to Gilgamesh by Enkidu in the Babylonian Epic.

² Perhaps the inspiration for the incident in *St. Patrick's Purgatory*, wherein Sir Owayne sees souls nailed to the ground, was gained from this description, and it was undoubtedly the source whence Dante derived a similar punishment in his *Inferno*.

³ A curious passage, which seems to indicate that Hercules was supposed to have two souls, one human and the other Divine, and that though the Divine Soul went to Heaven, the human soul, like that of any other hero, went to Hades. For further information on this point, see Ward's *Who Was Abiff?* p. 120.

⁴ That is, he came out of the Underground River of Ocean into the Upper Ocean of this world.

(a) *Odyssey*, Bk. XI. 1. 594. (Everyman Ed.).

(b) *Ibid.* 1. 699.

From this account we do not learn much which will be of help to us in our study of the Hung ritual, but it is of importance as the basis of Classical beliefs on the subject, which by the time of Virgil had developed considerably and contained striking analogies with many incidents in the Triad ceremony.

VIRGIL'S UNDERWORLD.

Virgil,¹ in the 6th book of the *Æneid*,^(a) describes the Underworld as conceived by an educated man of his day, and his account portrays the Roman traditions as to what befell a man in the world beyond the grave. This description is important as through Dante the influence of this great Roman poet penetrated well into modern times, and helped to shape the popular conceptions of Hell which are still current in Western Europe.

Æneas, anxious once more to see his father, Anchises, consults the Sibyl of Apollo² at Cumæ, who replies:—

"Down to Avernus the descent is light,
The gates of Dis stand open day and night;
But upward thence thy journey to retrace
There lies the labour; 'tis a task of might
By few achieved."

and adds that if he is determined to make this dangerous journey he must go to a dark and dismal wood which lies in a valley near by, and there pluck a "Golden bough" (of mistletoe).³ This wood is sacred to Proserpine, the wife of Pluto, King of the Underworld. If he can do this it will be accepted as a sign, empowering him to pass the Wardens of the Underworld. She warns him, however, that if the fates are propitious it will come away easily, but if his demands are not pleasing to Heaven neither "steel nor strength of arm shall rend the prize away."

Æneas on leaving the Sibyl finds one of his companions dead, and while

¹He was born near Mantua, in B.C. 70, and died at Brindisi, A.D. 19.

²Apollo was the Sun God, and we thus obtain a hint that as the sun can travel through the Underworld he can take with him those he loves. When "exalted" the Sibyl was supposed to be inspired by the god who was in temporary possession of her body. Therefore when the Sibyl went with Æneas on his journey, in reality the sun god was with him, and so although there is no Boat of the Sun, or Hung Boat, the same idea is indicated. This fact is proved by the phrase Virgil uses of the Sibyl when Charon refuses to let them pass, "Briefly the seer Amphrysian spake." Amphrysian was a title of Apollo.

³The mistletoe is sacred to many races and is often associated with the Underworld. For example, it was with an arrow made from the mistletoe that Loki brought about the murder of Baldur. There is a curious legend that the cross of Christ was made from a bough of mistletoe, although most legends say it was the Aspen. Other plants are likewise said to open the gates of the underworld, as, for example, the four-leaf clover, which according to the English Fairy tales admits its finder to Fairyland.

^(a)Many translations of Virgil's *Æneid* have appeared in the English language, the best being those by Dryden, in 1697, Conington, 1870, Mackail, 1885, and E. Fairfax Taylor, 1908, which latter is the version quoted here, the edition being that issued in the Everyman Series,

performing the funeral rites¹ sees two doves² alight near by. He at once suspects that they will lead him to the magic bough and follows them. Nor is he disappointed in his surmise, for on the slopes of Mount Avernus "dark as night" he finds and plucks the golden bough.

When the ceremonies over his dead comrade are finished Æneas hastens to the Sibyl, and under her instructions sacrifices four black oxen.³ These are offered in front of a "monstrous cave" in Mount Avernus,⁴ "sheltered from access by the lake's dark waters." The Sibyl pours wine over the heads of the oxen,

"She plucks the hairs that sprouted on the head
And burns them as the first fruits of the dead."⁵
Calling on Hecate, whose reign
In Heaven and Erebus is owned with dread."⁶

The oxen are then slaughtered, and just at dawn⁷ the earth shakes, the mountains tremble, and "Hell dogs baying through the gloom" proclaim the Goddess near. Thereupon the Sibyl sends away the others and leads Æneas alone into the cave's mouth⁸, where he sees all manner of hideous shapes amid the gloom. In due course he reaches the shores of the river Acheron which flows into a deep sea, named Cocytus. The way across this river is by the Ferry boat of Charon,⁹ where he sees a host of spirits wailing, rushing up and down the shore, and begging Charon to ferry them over. To Æneas's surprise he refuses to take some, who thereupon appear overwhelmed with grief. The Sibyl explains that the spirits thus refused were those over whom the proper rites of burial had not been performed.

¹Evidently we have here a reference to the idea that only the dead enter the Underworld and Æneas, as it were, slips in with the dead hero.

²Birds, especially doves, are often considered to be the souls of the dead. Compare the legend of the Willow Pattern Plate. No doubt originally the doves would have represented the soul of the dead hero who was being buried. Why there are two it is not easy to say, but perhaps it is a hint that the Romans, like the ancient Egyptians, thought that a man had more than one soul. Compare also the three souls believed in by the Chinese.

³Black is always associated with magic, and in England the witches sacrificed a black cat. The black ox sacrificed in the Triad ceremony is no doubt a remembrance of similar sacrifices to the Gods of the Underworld. In like manner a white horse was sacrificed to Diomedes and represented the Solar principle.

⁴Avernus here symbolises the Mountain of the Sunset found in other legends. The fact that the cave was protected by a lake brings to mind the *Waters of Death* in the legend of Gilgamesh, and the general situation should be compared with the description of the Black Dragon Mountain, at whose foot were the Waters of the Three Rivers in the Hung ritual.

⁵Compare with this the cutting of the hair of the initiates in the Hung Ceremony.

⁶Hecate was the sinister side of Diana, Goddess of the Moon, and no doubt was originally the dark moon, invisible to man. As such she is still worshipped by the witches of Italy. Hecate is always associated with magic and with Erebus, the Underworld.

⁷This refers to the tradition that the souls enter the true Underworld at dawn the day after death. It will be remembered that in the Hung Ritual the Vanguard says he started at dawn.

⁸This is the first gate and is guarded by monsters, some of which the poet has rationalised as disease, famine, etc., while others, such as the Chimera, he has left as he found them in the tradition. They should be compared with the Emu-men of the Australian legend, and the monsters in Tuat.

⁹The ferry boat here, as in the Egyptian Tuat, takes the place of the Bridge which leads into the Underworld.

THE HUNG SOCIETY.

"These are the needy, who a burial crave,
The Ferry man is Charon, none that wave
Can traverse, ere his bones have rested in the grave.

A hundred years they wander in the cold
Around these shores, till at the destined date
The wished for pools, admitted, they behold."¹

Among them Æneas is grieved to see his comrade Palinurus, who begs him to find his bones and scatter earth on them or, better still,

"Reach forth thy hand, and bear me to my rest
Dead with the dead, to ease me of my woe."²

But the Sibyl sharply reproves him for his "impious request" and tells him that unburied he cannot reach "yon relentless shore." When Æneas approaches Charon he at first refuses to take him aboard,³ but at the sight of the golden bough admits the strength of the charm and takes Æneas and the Sibyl across. Here they come to the mouth of the second cave,⁴ guarded by Cerberus, whom the Sibyl quiets by means of a morsel of drugged bread, and they then find themselves in a land where Minos reigns. He judged the lesser sinners, and though their lot was hard his realm was rather in the nature of Purgatory than of Hell itself. It was surrounded nine times by the River Styx, and so divided into as many regions. Here Æneas meets with suicides, including Dido, and later comes into contact with many of the Greek and Trojan heroes who fell at Troy. He finds, however, that they are but feeble ghosts, the shadows of what they once were, and still bear upon them the wounds and disfigurements received in the war. But at mid-day the Sibyl tells him that they must hasten on; to the left lies Dis and Tartarus proper, where poor sinners expiate with pains the lives they lived

¹ Here we are shown clearly the awful fate awaiting those who, may be through no fault of their own, were not properly buried. This view is almost universal among primitive and ancient races. We see it in the legend of Gilgamesh and in the beliefs of Egypt, and can therefore realise why to the Chinese one of the most dreaded penalties for a breach of an obligation is lack of a proper burial. Virgil, in a more humane and sophisticated age, places some limit to the sufferings of the homeless ghost, but more primitive races are not troubled by any such conscientious scruples. It is possible that the Egyptian solution of the problem, which was that in such cases you never entered into a new life at all, was a compromise between the earlier view of an everlasting wretchedness and Virgil's belief that it was limited to a period of purging sorrow. This part of the classical tradition has been given at considerable length in order to show why it was considered important that men should know what did befall them after death, lest by carelessness on their own part, or on the part of their relations, the dead should suffer such woe.

² It should be noted that to the homeless ghost even Hell is better than no home, and a modern poet has carried forward this tradition to the 20th century, for in *Tomlinson*, Kipling describes how
"The wind that blows between the worlds, it nipped him to the bone,
And he yearned to the flare of Hell Gate there, as the light of his own hearth stone."

³ In like manner Ur Shanabi refused to take Gilgamesh till he had paid a fee, consisting of poles which he had to cut in the forest.

⁴ This is the Second Gate. It should be noted, however, that in this place is the Judgment of Minos and not the great Judgment of Osiris, which takes place in the City of Dis itself.



A JUDGE OF HELL.
(Chinese Pottery of the Ming Period).

amiss.¹ Beyond the walls of Dis, and to the right, lay the Elysian Fields, whither they hasten. They skirt the dismal city of Dis, which was girt with a triple wall, round whose base ran the flaming River of Phlegethon,² In front was a massive gate³ guarded by Tisiphone, clad in blood-stained garments, and from behind the iron gates they hear the shrieks of the damned, the cracking of whips and the clang of chains.

Æneas is not allowed to enter the City, for the Sibyl tells him that into this accursed domain no good person can enter. Here Rhadamanthus is the stern, but just, judge who tries the evil souls, who themselves confess their crimes and he decrees their doom. They are then thrust through the doors of the Judgment Hall into the particular part of Hell allotted for their crimes. As they continue on their way the Sybil describes some of the forms of punishment, and it appears that most of the culprits are traitors, murderers, misers, and the like.

Before they quit the spot Æneas has to "pay the god his due," and accordingly they step up to the gateway and hang over it the Golden Bough. This done, they continue on their way, and soon reach the realms of rest, the Elysian Fields. Here dwell the happy souls; amid lawns of green, near the beautiful River Eridunus, in a soft, purple light, they possess a sun and stars seen only by themselves. They still practice athletic sports and hear sweet music. Æneas notices that they are wearing white fillets and he soon meets his father, who explains to him that after being purged of earthly stain the souls drink of the Waters of Lethe, and straightway forget their former earthly lives. Then they become restless and long to be born again on earth, although of that place they remember nothing. From the souls whom he sees around him shall come the heroes of tomorrow, and this is the true doctrine of the transmigration of souls. Anchises then points out the coming heroes of Rome and explains that,

"First Heaven and earth and Ocean's liquid plains,
The Moon's bright globe and planets of the pole
One Mind, infused to every part, sustains
One universal, animating soul⁴
Quickens, unites and mingles with the whole.
Hence man proceeds, and beasts and birds of air
And monsters that in marble Ocean roll,
And fiery energy divine they share
Save what corruption clogs and earthly limbs impair."

¹Virgil was too highly evolved to believe that the pains of Tartarus could befall a man simply through failure to know the names of the Gates, as did the early Egyptians, and he seems to think that even this Hell is not eternal, but merely purging. The left was the unlucky side among the Romans.

²Compare with the Fiery Ditch in the Hung ritual.

³This is the Third Gate, which admits to the Hall of Judgment.

⁴This is strikingly similar to the Hindu conception of God, the more so as it is linked with the doctrine of reincarnation.

This then completes the journey of Æneas through the Underworld, and mingled with the crude traditions of his primitive ancestors, which age had hallowed so that he dared not ignore them, Virgil interwove some of the highest ideas of God, of the future life and, above all, of the Universal Soul which links all creation in its golden orb. To return to our immediate theme, however, we should note three Gates, a Ferry instead of a Bridge, the Judgment Hall of Dis, and the Elysian Fields, but there is no mention of the Holy City, or City of Willows of the Chinese. Apparently Virgil did not envisage the possibility of ordinary mortals reaching the City of the Gods, and his Elysian Fields correspond to the Isle of the Blest in the Chinese ritual—the Earthly Paradise of Sir Owayne in the Mediæval legend. Although there is no Boat of the Sun we find that the Sibyl is the temporary habitation of the Sun god, Apollo, and in one line is actually called by one of his titles, *Amphrysian*.



TUAMUTEF.

ONE OF THE FOUR SONS OF HORUS
WHO CORRESPOND WITH THE
FOUR GREAT EXCELLENT ONES OF
THE HUNG RITUAL.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE BRIDGES OF HEAVEN AND HELL AMONG THE NORSE.



ALTHOUGH the traditions and beliefs of the Greeks and Romans have left unmistakable traces in the eschatology of Western Europe, so far as the Anglo-Saxons are concerned there is not the slightest doubt that the beliefs of our heathen ancestors also contributed to the views held by mediæval writers. It is certainly noteworthy that whereas the classical beliefs set forth by Virgil contain no reference to a bridge, but emphatically speak of a ferry, in mediæval legends the Brig o' Dred constantly recurs. It is, of course, possible that this is derived from Lucian, but a Norse origin is just as likely, and in any case the fact that such a belief was current among the Teutonic races of Northern Europe would strengthen the influence of the tradition derived from Lucian, to the detriment of the Ferry boat, which is found in Roman beliefs. It is thus with peculiar interest that we turn from the sunny lands and azure sea of the Mediterranean to the grey seas and bleak mountains of Scandinavia in order to study the beliefs of the Danes and Norsemen, which were undoubtedly similar to those held by the heathen Anglo-Saxons, who swept away the Roman civilisation in these lands.

From the Elder and the Younger *Eddas*,^(a) c. 1100-1175, we can obtain a fairly clear idea of the Norse conceptions of the Underworld and Heaven. The latter was called *Asgard* and was perched on a high mountain, which stood in the middle of the earth and was linked by the Rainbow Bridge, Byfrost, with the Mountains of Sunrise and Sunset. The gate on to Byfrost was apparently situated in the dawn-land of the East and was guarded by Heimdall, who unlocked the gates for the gods to pass across when they journeyed to the three Norns whose house could only be reached from its crown.¹ By the house was the fountain of Urda, which fertilised the whole world.² Heimdall, however, would not allow Thor to mount the bridge, declaring that he was too heavy and would break it. Thor therefore had to wade through two cloud rivers, named *Kormit* and *Ermit*, but for all that reached the dwelling place of the Norns before the other gods.³ This bridge was first discovered by Odin after he had looked into Niflheim, the Underworld, a most significant fact, and will

¹ Compare therewith the three Buddhas who stand on the bridge of iron and brass in the Hung ritual.
² Compare with the water which reached to the Heavens in the City of Willows.

³ It will be remembered that the Hung Heroes likewise did not pass over the bridge but crossed the river by stepping stones.

(a) K. Simrock, *Die Edda* (Stuttgart, 1882). The most scholarly work on the Eddas, but many interesting details will be found in A. & E. Keary's, *The Heroes of Asgard*.

be broken down when Surtur (primeval fire) rides over it to attack Asgard on the day of Ragnarock.

Asgard was a fair land, and it was also the name of the Celestial City, within which were many mansions, and especially Vallhalla, where Odin gathered to himself the heroes slain in battle. Those who died in bed, even if they had been warriors, all women, and those men who were not "chosen by Odin" went to the City of Hela, in Niflheim. This was a cold, uncomfortable place, although not a place of torment, but there existed another place situated "in Mastrond," its doors turned Northward, where dwelt blood-thirsty men and perjurers, suffering bitter torments. The exclusion of all save those who fell in battle is perfectly logical once we have grasped the fundamental idea underlying Norse beliefs. Odin, All-Father, knew that at last Asgard would be stormed by the Spirits of Chaos, and in order to put up the best fight possible was always gathering recruits for the army of the gods by choosing the bravest men of earth. If in his eyes a man was suitable for that great task he chose him by taking him to himself in battle, and therefore those not thus chosen had been rejected for some good reason. It was not mere moral excellence which gained a seat in Vallhalla, but bravery and skill in war. No doubt, however, loyalty was considered important, for a disloyal and untrustworthy man on earth could not be relied upon to do his duty in the Last Great Fight.

Whether the "Heroes" had to pass through the Underworld and over the bridge of Byfrost is not quite certain, but it seems so, for if not, why was it customary to place a dead warrior in the "longboat," set it on fire and launch it out, blazing, towards the West? This custom can partly be explained perhaps by the desire to give the warrior his war boat in the next world, and the fact that a complete war boat has been found buried under a grave-mound in Scandinavia, and not burnt, rather confirms this idea. On the other hand, it would be of no use in Niflheim or even in Asgard, where the last fight was round the City, and we read that Surtur and his followers come over the sea and that the gods ride into it to meet them.

"O Fafnir, what of the Isle, and what hast thou known of its name,
Where the gods shall mingle edges with Surt and the Sons of the
Flame?

O child, O *Strong Compeller*! Unshapen is it hight;
There the fallow blades shall be shaken and the Dark and the Day
shall smite,

When the Bridge of the Gods is broken, and their white steeds swim
In the sea^(a),

And the uttermost field is stricken, last strife of thee and me."¹

¹The bridge is Byfrost. The white horses of the gods bring to mind the fact that white horses are in many countries sacred to the gods of Light. Among the Norse a horse was sacrificed to Thor and probably also to Odin. Compare the white horse sacrificed during the Hung ceremony.

(a)W; Morris, *Sigurd the Volsung*. 4th ed., (1887), Bk. II., pp. 125-126.

The Gods, however, certainly had their own boat, *Skidbladnir* in which they travelled over the world. Moreover, *Ringhorn* is mentioned as the boat of Baldur, and in this his body was placed at his death. The vessel was then set on fire and launched towards the West where it blended with the sunset like a "dull red lamp".

All round the world was a ring of mountains and over the Eastern range at sun-rise the sun's boat (for Baldur was the Sun-god) swam into the heavens, to disappear among the Mountains of Sunset in the West. The earth was a vast, flat island, on which men toiled and fought, and in the centre rose the Mountain of the Gods, on whose top was the Holy City of Asgard, in the midst of which rose the golden halls of Vallhalla where the Heroes feasted with the Gods. Round this flat, middle kingdom of men ran the Ocean, like a great river, which was prevented from falling off the earth by the saucer-like ridge of mountains. But underneath the world lay Nifheim, in the midst of which was the City of Hela, Goddess of the Underworld. The description of this Underworld is not very precise, but we can glean certain interesting facts from the account of the journey which Odin is said to have made into Hell when he heard of the evil dreams which had come to Baldur. Further information may be gathered from the account of the visit of Hermod to Hela, to plead for the return of Baldur, and from this story we learn that there was another bridge besides Byfrost and that it was in the Underworld.¹

THE JOURNEY OF ODIN TO VALA IN NIFLHEIM.

Odin rode on Sleipnir, his eight footed horse, down the side of the Holy Mountain and entered a narrow defile between high, beetling cliffs. After travelling along this for a considerable time he reached a place where the earth opened her mouth.² He entered this opening and rode down a broad,³ steep slope, which in time brought him to the mouth of a cave, called *Gnipa*, which was the gate of Nifheim.⁴ But entrance was barred by the Hell-hound *Garm*⁵ who, though chained to a rock, succeeded in fastening on to Odin, who threw him off three times and at length passed him. But though Odin continued on his way, his blood dripped along the path he took. Once through the gates he turned East towards the grave of the dead prophetess, Vala.⁶

Here he dismounted and looked Northward through the bars into the city of Hellheim itself.⁷ He questioned Vala and the dead prophetess upbraided him.

¹See Illustration op. p. 46.

²Corresponding in some measure to the First Gate in the Hung ritual. This is the true gate of the Underworld.

³The middle road in the Triad ritual is said to be broad.

⁴The Second Gate.

⁵Compare with Cerberus in Virgil, but note that Odin had to pay a fee, his blood, and that he strove three times before he could enter. We may assume he was bitten thrice, as we are told he shook the dog off thrice. This fee of blood should be compared with the three Hung Cash.

⁶He followed the course the sun was supposed to take in the Underworld, i.e., from West to East.

⁷The Third Gate which, be it noted, he never enters.

for disturbing her rest in a way similar to that in which Samuel upbraided Saul at Endor. He learned, however, that Baldur was doomed to die, but that Hela would give him up if all the world wept for him.

Despite the efforts of Frigga to protect Baldur, by making all things swear not to harm him, he was slain. Loki, the god of evil, found that she had forgotten the mistletoe,¹ and from it made a javelin which he thrust into the hand of Hödur, who was blind.² Loki guided Hödur's hand and Baldur fell dead. His funeral ceremonies then followed and his burning boat went Westward taking his soul to Nifheim. As soon as these ceremonies were ended Frigga called for a volunteer to descend into the Underworld and try to persuade Hela to give back Baldur. Hermod thereupon offered to go, and appears to have travelled by a somewhat different path from that taken by Odin.

THE JOURNEY OF HERMOD.

Hermod journeyed down a long, dark, slippery path till he came to Giallar Bru. Here he found a mighty, rushing river, and over it a bridge³ paved with stones, which at first sight seemed to be of gold but which on closer investigation Hermod found to be not gold but the tears shed by friends around the bed of the dying.⁴ When he reached the other side of Giallar Bridge he was challenged by a woman, who for ages had been sitting there to watch the dead enter.⁵ She stopped him and said, "Who art thou? But yesterday five troops of dead went over this bridge, but they did not shake it as much as thou hast done. I see, indeed, thou art not dead at all, why then dost thou ride in such hot haste to Hellheim?"

Hermod told her he was seeking Baldur and asked if he had passed that way. He was told that Baldur had passed riding to the place of the Dead which lay towards the North. Hermod therefore sped on until he came to

¹Note, the same bough as admitted Æneas into the Underworld.

²He is supposed to typify winter and was subsequently slain by Vali, a son of Odin, born after Baldur's death. He is considered more especially to represent January, who slays the old year and ushers in the new one, with Spring to come. The death of Baldur was celebrated at the Winter Solstice, or Yule-tide, after which the Lord of Misrule reigned for twelve days. His reign ended at Twelfth Night, when law and order were once more restored. This last date no doubt symbolises the slaying of Hödur by Vali. Kissing under the mistletoe is a modified version of the promiscuity which formerly took place under that symbol, i.e., the plant which slew Baldur. According to the principles of sympathetic magic this promiscuity was intended to cause the earth to fructify.

³The bridge again. In the Norse version we find two bridges: one into Hell, which should be compared with the similar bridge in Lucian which led into the City of the Damned, and the Rainbow Bridge to Heaven, which should be compared with the Bridge of Water in Lucian. There are similarly two bridges in the Hung ceremony. They are clearly mentioned in the Traditional History, and we have traces of both of them in the journey of the candidate.

⁴Here we obtain a possible explanation of the custom among the Greeks and Romans of burying with the dead tear bottles filled with tears. These were produced by hired mourners, expert in weeping copiously.

⁵The challenge of the woman represents the first barrier. Like Timon in Lucian, she is on the Hell side of the bridge. Like Charon she perceives the difference between a living man and a ghost.

the City of Hellheim¹ and leapt its barred gates in one tremendous leap. He found that in this City each word spoken on earth echoed for ever, and the noise was deafening, but the dead heard nothing, for their ears had been stunned long since. Hermod then came to the Palace of Hela whose threshold was named *Precipice*,² and whose entrance hall was called *Wildstorm*. But Hermod went forward, even to the Banquet Hall, where he found Hela presiding, with Baldur on her right hand and his wife on her left. A description of the phantom feast then follows, from which we learn that the table was called, *Hunger* and the wine, *Burning Thirst*. Afterwards he accompanied Baldur to his sleeping chamber, where the bed was called, *Unrest*, and the tapestries of the walls, *Despair*.⁴

Next day Hela promised that if all things living and dead wept for Baldur he should be released, but that if even one thing refused Hellheim must hold its own. Hermod therefore hastened back to Asgard, and Odin sent out his Valkeries to call on all to weep, and as they did so they kept casting up their hands to heaven. Even the giants wept when they heard the dread news, and the whole earth was full of lamentation. At length the Valkeries, considering that their work was ended, began to descend into the Underworld to claim Baldur. When they reached the cave, *Gnipa*, where Garm lay chained, they saw a giantess, named *Thaukt*,⁴ who sat at the entrance with her back to them, and when they called on her to weep she refused, saying, "Let Hela keep what she hath got." In consequence Hela refused to release Baldur. The rest of the story lies outside our theme. With the loss of Baldur, and, therefore, of goodness and light, the end of the Gods draws near, and Odin foresees the last battle of Ragnarok and the destruction of the ordered world, which he had created out of chaos.

NORSE BELIEFS AND THE HUNG RITUAL.

If we consider the Norse stories carefully we shall find that from them we have obtained a fairly clear picture of what the ancients thought occurred after death. In particular we can, as it were, place geographically the two bridges, which are often lost or amalgamated in other stories. Heaven is a Mountain in the centre of a flat saucer whose outer rim consists of mountains, while underneath this saucer is the Underworld. The Dead enter the Boat of the Sun in the West and in it pass over the Western rim. The Underworld proper is cut off from this world by an Underground River, which corresponds with the above-ground River of the Ocean. The reverse side of the

¹This is the Second Gate, according to this version.

²The Third Gate and the Judgment Hall. Note the phantom mockery of the feast of the gods in Asgard.

³Compare similar parables in Bunyan, and also the motto which, according to Dante, was graven over the gates of Inferno, "All hope abandon ye who enter here."

⁴According to some accounts this giantess was none other than Loki in disguise.

Mountains of Sunset form the strand of this Underground River, and here the unburied dead are detained, and cannot pass the bridge (or ferry) on to the mainland of the Underworld.

This mainland corresponds with the Midgard of Earth, and in the centre is the City of Hell, a kind of mockery of the City of the Gods. Often the Mountain of the Gods is represented in Hell by a vast pit, at the bottom of which lies the Infernal City. As the souls enter the true Underworld, or Infernal Midgard, they are challenged, and this represents the First Gate. When they reach the Pit, or the Infernal Mountain, they are again challenged, and lastly, when they reach the Infernal City they are challenged for the third time. Sometimes the City wall marks the confines of the Pit, and the third challenge is on their attempting to enter the Judgment Hall of the Ruler of the Underworld. If the deceased passed safely through the Judgment Hall he continued until he came out on the other side of the "saucer," and found himself at Dawn amid the Mountains of the East. Here he saw the Rainbow Bridge, which was guarded by a Celestial Guardian. The land at the foot of the bridge represented a kind of Earthly Paradise. If the guardian of the bridge allowed it, he passed up the bridge, amid the clouds, on to the Mountain of the Gods, and so into the Holy City, but he must not pass the crown of the bridge, for there stood the Fates, by the Fountain of Living Water, and these were above the Gods. Perhaps in them we shall see the dim beginning of the doctrine of the triune nature of the Supreme Being, while the gods are but His servants and messengers. The triune nature of the Godhead is His creative, preservative and transmutative attributes, which correspond with time, past, present, and future.

It must, however, be clearly understood that in most versions of this tradition the two bridges have become merged into one, and often the Solar Barque itself has been confounded with one of them and turned into a ferry. For example, it is difficult to decide whether the boat Gilgamish entered is that of the Sun or a ferry boat, such as that of Charon, which represents the first bridge, but it might be argued that it was similar to the boat of Osiris, which bore the Blest to the Isle of Truth, and therefore corresponds to the second bridge. On the other hand, in the story of Lucian, though the Isles of the Blest are out of their proper place, the two bridges can be identified. The first is that guarded by Timon on the Isles of the Damned, while the Rainbow Bridge which leads to Paradise is the Water bridge. When the belief grew up that the Underworld was solely a place of torment for the damned, which the righteous did not enter, the Rainbow Bridge was envisaged as spanning Hell,¹ and so the Blest did not have to pass the Infernal Bridge at all. Where Purgatory was accepted an interesting compromise occurred, and the Rainbow Bridge, with one foot in Purgatory and the other in Paradise, spans the place of

¹Of this type is the red hot bar over Hell in the Mahommedan tradition, as is shown by the fact that the good deeds of the Faithful form cushions of cloud under their feet to protect them.



THE RAINBOW BRIDGE.
(From a Book of Hours).

everlasting pain, i.e., the Pit. Of this nature is the bridge^(a) Sir Owayne crossed.¹

There is one other important variation. The Rainbow Bridge of the Norse was supposed to stretch right across the visible world, one foot resting on the Mountains of the Dawn, the crown being actually above the City of Asgard, and the other foot resting on the Mountains of Sunset. Thus, while the Earthly Paradise may sometimes appear to be in the East, and if the souls have to pass through the Underworld to reach it, this is the logical position, where this is deemed unnecessary the Earthly Paradise may be in the West, and those considered worthy to enter the City of the Gods can thence ascend the Bridge into the Celestial City. As the Buddhists in China constantly speak of the Western Paradise, and the same geographical position is assigned to this place by the Taoists, it would appear as if worthy souls could ascend the bridge in the West, and so reach the City of Willows without passing through the Underworld, although from the Triad ritual we are led to believe that they were given a glimpse into Hell.

In this ritual there has been a strong tendency to emphasise the Celestial Bridge and to pass over the Infernal Bridge lightly. Bearing in mind, however, that the Chinese, like most ancient races, believed that Heaven, Earth and the Underworld were all more or less made on the same pattern, it is not surprising if we find some of the landmarks of the Underworld reproduced in the Celestial world, and tending to become confounded with it. We have a very definite reference in the two bridges over which the monks passed during their escape from the burning Abbey: the first bridge, or causeway, being that which led amid the flames to comparative safety, and this represents an Infernal Bridge, but whether it leads "into the Underworld," or "over the Pit," is not quite clear, while the second bridge, which was raised by the Genii over the sea, represents the Celestial Bridge.

In the ritual proper the Bridge leading into the Underworld seems to be represented by that over which the candidate was supposed to pass before he reached the Lodge at all, and when this part of the ceremony was abandoned its place seems to have been taken by the ceremony of passing under an arch of steel, which is actually called, "crossing the bridge." Undoubtedly in the minds of the Hung brethren this first bridge has become confused with the Celestial one, but since in the Vanguard's answers we learn that the candidates were never permitted to cross the bridge which led from the Isle of the Blest to the Market Place of Universal Peace, but instead had to go by way of the stepping stones, we see that the phrase, "crossing the bridge," for this preliminary ceremony cannot apply to the Celestial Bridge.

At the same time the phrase which occurs in some rituals, according to which the candidates leap the fiery ditch, shows that the middle bridge over the

¹So also is that in the R.O.S., since it leads out of a dungeon.

^(a)See p. 151.

Pit also occurs in the ceremony, although the Celestial and Infernal Bridges had become confused in the minds of the members of the society. From the rest of the ritual it is quite clear that the Celestial bridge crosses a river formed by three rivers, and these would represent the meeting place of the three great rivers of the world: the Underground River, the Earthly Ocean and the Celestial River of Clouds. But this original conception seems almost lost since in some rituals we are told that the three rivers are three actual rivers which exist in China, which, of course, unite in the earthly ocean.¹

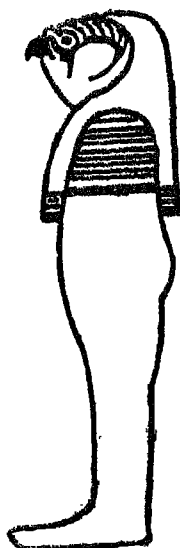
We thus see that the Norse tradition has enabled us to gain considerable insight into the allegory enshrined in the Hung ritual, but before leaving the Norse legends one or two additional points are worth mentioning. Heimdall, guardian of the Rainbow Bridge, Byfrost, had a horn, named, *The Giallar Horn*, which is the same name as was given to the River of the Underworld, whose bridge also bore this name. It would therefore seem that even here there was some connection between the two bridges in the popular mind, which in time would have led them to become amalgamated. Other interesting facts can be gathered from a close study of the Norse legends. There are distinct suggestions of the use of signs similar to those found in certain initiation rites, for we learn that when Odin summoned the dwarfs before him to render an account of their evil lives they hesitated at the door of his Hall of Judgment. Then he "beckoned to them with his hand, thrice" and they entered. This sign I have not been able to trace in the Triad ceremonies, but if a Triad member sees a fight taking place between a brother and an outsider he fans himself thrice, as if beckoning him, to show that he is a brother and will help him. This sign will also be familiar to some Englishmen.

The Hung sign for Fire is also referred to in the Norse legends on at least two occasions, and it is interesting to note that on the first it is associated with fire and on the second with distress and sorrow. We are told that Frey climbed to the high throne of Odin, from which it was possible to see all that took place in the whole world. From here he looked into Jotunheim (Giant Land) and saw a beautiful giantess raise up her white arms above her head. She seemed to be unlatching the door of her father's house, but Frey said that her arms flamed like streaks of lightning in the darkness, and between them he saw her face. Whereupon he fell in love with her and subsequently married her. It is generally agreed by scholars that her arms symbolised the lightning. Frey could not go to Jotunheim to woo her and so sent a friend, who stole Frey's reflection, which he found in a pool, and placing the water with the reflection in his horn carried it with him to Jotunheim. As soon as the Giantess saw the reflection of Frey she fell in love with him and agreed to marry him. This incident is important, as it shows that the Norse, like many other primitive races, believed that the reflection could be stolen, and brings to mind the pur-

¹Originally there were probably three bridges. See Vol. III.

pose of the magic mirror in the Triad ceremonies.¹ The other reference to the Hung sign for Fire is mentioned in this chapter. It was with this gesture that the Valkeries announced to Odin that all the world wept for Baldur and they wept with the world. We thus see the same sign used in both senses. Let us now turn to consider other examples of the framework of the Triad ritual, particularly those current in Mediæval Europe.

¹See Vol. I. Chap. XIV.



QURBSNUY
ANOTHER SON OF HORUS).

CHAPTER XVIII.

ST. BRENDON'S VOYAGE AND THE JOURNEY OF SIR OWAYNE.



IN this early mediæval legend we have a clear example of the Solar Barque which carries the souls, a feature lacking in the next story, which deals with the adventures of Sir Owayne. This legend may have arisen from a distorted memory passed down by word of mouth from Lucian's *Vera Historia*, but it is also possible that it has an independent origin dating back to Celtic mythology. In support of the latter view it should be noted that St. Brendon is called Abbot of Hibernia, and he is usually stated to have been of Irish birth, although in the *South English Legendary*^(a) it is claimed that he was English.

THE LEGEND.

St. Brendon, Abbot of Hibernia, was told by another Abbot, Beryn, how his son Mernok made a voyage to the Isles of the Blest. The boat traversed the Eastern Ocean and for one whole day they were in complete darkness, but they ultimately reached a land brighter than the Sun. This was the Lord's Own land and it was because of Him that it was thus full of light. This story made St. Brendon determine to set out on a like quest, and, taking twelve monks with him,¹ he set sail in a boat into the unknown. After a while they saw to the north a large Island and when they landed they were led to a beautiful hall, wherein was spread a banquet of bread and fish. They next landed on the Isle of Sheep, after which they arrived at an island where a fallen angel, in the shape of a bird, told St. Brendon that they still had six years' travel before them and that each day they must hold the Easter Festival.² They continued to sail eastward for four months and were in great peril.³ At length they reached a safe harbour where they were entertained by a venerable

¹Twelve and St. Brendon, corresponding no doubt to Christ and His Apostles, but also carrying on the tradition of the Sun and the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

²This, be it remembered, celebrates the Resurrection and therefore was particularly appropriate to those who were travelling in the boat of the Soul. As there were six years' travel ahead we may perhaps assume that one year had already passed and that the total journey was seven years.

³The Sun, once it had entered the Underworld, was supposed to travel Eastward and was in peril from the powers of Darkness.

(a)See, *South English Legendary*, No. 87 of the Publications of the Early English Text Society, pub. 1887 by N. Trübner & Co., Ed. by Dr. Carl Horstmann. The original MS. is M. S. Laud 108 in the Bodleian library. From the same source comes the story of Sir Owayne's Journey through St. Patrick's Purgatory, which follows. The M.S. dates from c. 1280 A.D.

old man, and soon after landed on another island, but discovered to their amazement that it was a whale.¹ After departing from the whale they celebrated St. Peter's Day by a feast, during which the fishes gathered round the boat and St. Brendon preached to them.²

A south wind arose and drove the ship before it towards the north for eight days, until they reached a gloomy land, overhung with foul-smelling smoke. The noise was terrible and St. Brendon knew that this was the mouth of Hell.³ Here the devils attacked them and carried off one of the monks, who had lived an evil life, and cast him into the fire.⁴

Then a North wind arose and drove the ship southward, and they came to a lonely rock on which they found Judas Iscariot. They learnt that Christ had granted that each Sunday He might creep out of Hell and rest for awhile on this rock. From Saturday even until Sunday even he was allowed to stay there and, in addition, for twelve whole days at mid-winter, from the beginning of Easter till Whitsun Day, and also at our Lord's feast.⁵ At all other times he was in Hell. This mercy was because of certain good deeds he had wrought on earth, and our Lord is full of mercy. Just then the devils came to carry him off because his time of grace had expired, but St. Brendon succeeded in gaining for

¹This seems a dim recollection of the whale in Lucian.

²St. Peter was the *Great Fisherman*. It is possible that in this and in the words of our Lord, *I will make you fishers of men*, we have references to a current belief that on the Solar Barque stood a Divine Fisherman, who from time to time rescued souls who were in the water, not having been allowed to enter the boat, and drew them safely aboard. Dante tells us that there were many souls in the Stygian Flood who tried to climb on board the Ferry of Phlegyas, which must be compared with that of Charon, for it is the second Ferry in Dante's Hell. See Canto VII. It will make matters clear on one point if I draw attention to the fact that when Dante came to the first Ferry of Charon, which plied across Acheron, Charon said to Dante, "A lighter needs must carry thee," which shows that the Barque of the Sun, which carried the souls of the Blest, did not touch at the central island of Hell, but skirted it and went round by the Underground River of Ocean to the East. Those who were going through Hell disembarked at the Ferry of Charon.

³This corresponds with the Isle of the Damned in Lucian. It is clear that St. Brendon's ship turned North and touched at the Middle Land, near the pit of Hell.

⁴This monk seems to correspond with Judas in our Lord's life.

⁵The legend of Judas is very curious. First of all the twelve days are said to be at mid-winter and the word Christmas is not employed. It seems to indicate that we have here an old belief which has been slightly modified in order to bring it into line with Christianity. Probably the old belief was that with the death of the Lord of Justice and Goodness the souls in the Underworld were released from the law of punishment, to a limited extent, for the same period of days as that during which under the Lord of Misrule men were free from earthly laws. Perhaps the Lord of Misrule is really the King of the Underworld and in his absence the souls in bondage were able to run riot for a time, till he returned. The Lord's Feast is perhaps Corpus Christi, although this festival was not instituted until 1284. It may, however, be a late accretion to the legend, for the manuscript itself is not earlier than 1280. On the other hand, the Last Supper, i.e., Holy Thursday, has an equally good claim. If this day be accepted it implies that each year Judas re-enacted the passion, namely, came forth from Hell to celebrate Holy Thursday, returned thereto on Good Friday to commemorate his suicide and the time spent by Christ in the Underworld, then came forth once more on Easter Sunday in memory of the fact that Our Lord harrowed Hell.

It should be noted that there is more than one version of the Voyage of St. Brendon and details vary considerably. For example, one account says that each year for seven years the travellers returned to the whale and there celebrated Easter,

him a few more hours' respite until the following day, when he was carried back to Hell again.

St. Brendon next reached the *Island of Paul the Hermit*, after three days' journey,¹ and then held Easter on a whale's back, from whence they proceeded to the bird's Paradise, and forty days later reached the Isle of the Blest. This was a most beautiful country where it was always day, the trees were ever in fruit and all were happy.² A young and handsome man came to St. Brendon and told him that he could not remain there, but that after his return to Ireland he would die and then he could return. He made them load the vessel with the Celestial fruit, and they set sail.³ Before long they returned home, where they were welcomed by the monks of the Abbey, and soon afterwards St. Brendon died. Over his body men raised a fair Abbey, and at his shrine many miracles were wrought.

In considering this narrative we must realise that the original story of the Journey of the Boat of Souls has become overlaid with much fabulous matter, collected from such stories as that of Lucian, and incidents are often duplicated. Secondly, the manuscript itself contains repetitions of the same incident over and over again. For example, in lines 148 to 228 we are told that the monks landed on a fish's back, and then came to the Birds' Paradise. In lines 368-404 we are again told the same incident, and yet in lines 668-684 we are once more given exactly the same details. The last position, however, is evidently the correct one.

When we discard these reduplications we obtain a story which fairly accurately depicts the journey of the Solar Barque carrying the souls of men through the Underworld. The first spot touched is the land beyond the rim of the world, where they partake of a meal and are met by an old man who directs them on their way. We might almost call him the King of the West. They then start the real journey through the Underworld, which is full of perils, but it should be noted that the boat has been covered with ox hides, a clear reference to the custom of sacrificing an ox, the beast sacred to the Earth goddess, before entering her domain. This should be compared with the sacrifice of the black ox in the Hung ceremony.

According to lines 420-480, during their voyage they were miraculously fed with red grapes, which, of course, symbolise the life blood of the Sun, and

¹There seems here a reference to the three days spent by our Lord in the grave, as is shown by the fact that forty days after leaving the island they reached the promised land. These forty days would correspond with His forty days on earth after the Resurrection. The whale symbolises the tomb, as with Jonah, and the mention of Easter seems to prove conclusively that they were now coming out of the Underworld in the East. Perhaps the Birds' Paradise refers to the Paradise to which our Lord conveyed the penitent thief while His body was in the tomb.

²These are the Isles of the Blest, and correspond very closely to Heaven. They should be compared with the Isle of Truth in the Tuat.

³Compare the Hung peaches and the food given to Gilgamesh by the wife of Uta-Napishtim, also the incident in the Red Indian story, wherein we are told of the man who sought his wife in the next world but was told by the great Manitou that he must return to his tribe and finish his days there.

later of Christ. They touched at the Middle Kingdom of the Underworld, and even saw the Great Pit, which was the reverse of the Mountain of the Gods in the Upper world. The feast of the Hermit Paul¹ may be a reduplication of the first feast in the Borderland, but he himself is probably the Gate Keeper of Paradise. Their adventure on the whale's back is a brief epitome of the whole journey, after which they come out in the East into the Earthly Paradise. Viewed in this light the story becomes intelligible, and in a sense Sir Owayne's journey completes it by giving us the adventures of an intrepid hero who ventures to land in the Middle Kingdom of the Underworld and cross it on foot, instead of going round it by boat. It should be clearly understood that St. Brendon did not go across Hell: like Lucian, he merely touched its outer confines and then went on in his boat. On the other hand, Sir Owayne took a short cut through a hole in the earth and landed on the edge of the Middle Kingdom.

THE STORY OF ST. PATRICK'S PURGATORY.^(a)

St. Patrick found a pit in Ireland which led down into the Underworld, and he called it his Purgatory. Near the mouth of this pit he built an Abbey and on St. Patrick's Day men went to it that they might be cleansed of their sins before they died, and so have no need to go through Purgatory after death. The manner in which this was done was as follows:—

The penitent first had to confess to the Bishop and be shriven, and the latter then gave him a letter to the Prior of the Abbey,² who led him into the Church where he had to pray for fifteen days³ without moving.⁴ If at the end of this time he was still determined to persevere the Prior blessed him and, accompanied by a great procession of Priests, conducted him to the mouth of the Pit, which he entered—perhaps never to return, for if he did not re-appear by the next morning the monks who came to the pit's mouth to see if he had returned knew that he would never come forth again.⁵

¹For all that, the Hermit Paul himself is a well recognised semi-historical Saint who lived near St. Anthony and was fed by a raven, who each day brought him half a loaf. At length St. Anthony came to live with him and Paul welcomed him, although secretly wondering how two people could subsist on half a loaf. His kindness and trust in God were rewarded, for thereafter the raven brought a whole loaf.

²Apparently the Bishop was also titular Abbot of the Abbey. The Archbishop of Canterbury was in like manner Abbot of St. Augustine's Abbey at Canterbury.

³Note this is half a lunar month, and it was probably from the time of full moon until it had vanished from the sky. Compare with the date of the birth of the Captain of the Hung Boat, and that of his wife.

⁴Apparently also fasting. If so we may here obtain an explanation of what is behind the legend, namely a vision produced by prayer and fasting. The whole story sounds like a genuine initiation, as distinct from a mere initiation rite, and reminds us of the visions connected with the "Pit of the Oracle" of Trophonius in Greece.

⁵Thus the journey, like that of the Sun, covered the dark hours of the Night. St. Patrick's Day was March 17th, and was, perhaps, connected with the Spring Equinox, just as is Easter.

^(a)Legend 36 in *The South English Legendary*.

Now it came to pass in the days of King Stephen that a Knight named Sir Owayne resolved to attempt this dangerous journey. Having performed the necessary preliminaries, he entered the pit through a door, which the Prior unlocked. Once inside he found that it was pitch dark, but in due course saw a light and, making towards it, found a fair field in the midst of which was a beautiful hall, surrounded with cloisters, like an Abbey. Twelve monks in white robes met him¹ and one, who seemed as if he were their Prior,² warned him of the dangers which threatened him and that if he failed on his journey he would lose not only his life but his soul, which would be seized by the devil. If, however, he cried ever on the name of Jesus he would be saved.³ They then left him praying and soon after an awful noise arose on every side, like the howling of wild beasts, and a crowd of devils rushed into the Hall and surrounded him. At first they tried to cajole him, promising him honour and renown on earth if he would prove false to Christ, but on his ignoring their suggestions they seized him and flung him into the great fire that they had made in the Hall. The Knight, however, called on the name of Christ and the fire was quenched.

Then the fiends dragged him out of the hall through a waste land, black and dreary, where blew a wind which pierced him to the bone. First they dragged him east to the World's End:⁴ then southward into a vast field, whose end he could not see, where men and women were stretched out and nailed to the earth with nails of fire. Here they tried to do the same with him, but when he called on Christ they had to desist. Anon they dragged him through three other fields, where he saw similar torments being inflicted, but again was saved from a like fate by the power of Christ's Name.⁵ The fifth place of torment had a huge wheel with long spokes, containing many hooks and pikes on which the victims were impaled, and it was made of fire. The fiends turned this wheel and fastened Sir Owayne on it with many others, but when he called on Jesus he was saved. Thereupon the fiends hurled him out of that place, and he found himself before a house from which proceeded a horrible smell. He was dragged into this house wherein were ditches and pits full of boiling pitch and

¹ Compare the monastery on an island, which was the first island at which St. Brendon touched on his journey. This is the strand of the Underworld, but in this case the Hall of Judgment is at the edge of the Underworld, no doubt because the doom is not eternal, but in the nature of Purgatory.

² The Prior of St. Patrick sent him into the Underworld and another Prior in the Underworld received him. The monks were clearly there as guides, or judges, and were not themselves in torment. No doubt originally they were the twelve signs of the Zodiac in the Underworld, through which the Sun, here represented by Sir Owayne, had to travel at night, as he had during the day above ground.

³ In this connection it is interesting to remember that the Chinese Buddhists continually teach that whoso calls on the name of Amitabha Buddha shall be saved from Hell by the power of that name, and pass through to the Western Paradise.

⁴ That is to say, the end of the Underworld in the East.

⁵ Note the power of the Name, which in the Egyptian Tuat consisted of knowing the name of each place or Ruler in the Underworld, an idea which is replaced here by a higher conception.

brimstone, and also of boiling lead,¹ in which unfortunate souls were immersed, some up to the navel, some to the mouth, and others to the eyes. Hence he was hurled forth and led into a hall containing a deep pool, colder than snow, which sent forth a foul stench. A north wind blew keenly and pierced through the unfortunate souls who sat therein. The fiends warned him that at last his hour had come, and at the same moment the wind hurled him into the water, but as soon as he invoked Christ the fiends were compelled to pull him out again.

After this he was driven into another place where there was a huge pit, out of which came burning smoke. The lost souls flew up and down this pit in agony and could not escape. The fiends told him this was the Pit of Hell and he was about to be thrown therein, but if he would return to earth and give up the journey he might do so.² On his refusal he was cast into the burning pit, but was soon carried out by a blast of wind, when he invoked Christ. Whereupon the fiends dragged him to a pool of foul, stinking water, broad and deep, and overhung with fog. A very narrow bridge³ spanned this space which was almost invisible owing to the fog and smoke which hung around it.⁴ The knight was told to cross by this bridge and was driven on to it by the fiends. It was so steep that it seemed impossible to walk on it, and the devils told him that under the water was the Pit of Hell, as he would soon discover for himself, for they would send such a wind that it would hurl him from the crown of the bridge into the water, where fiends beneath were waiting to seize him.⁵

As the knight tried to climb the bridge he found it so steep and slippery that he began to despair.⁶ He felt a terror greater than he had ever before experienced, but he cried on the Name of Christ and went forward boldly. As he advanced the bridge seemed to get broader and less steep, and although the fiends beneath it⁷ tried to seize him, they were unable to do so. At length they gave up the pursuit altogether and the knight went on his way, praising Christ for the victory, for he felt safe at last.

He now found that he was in a pleasanter and brighter looking country,

¹ Similar pits are found in Lucian's account of the Isles of the Damned.

² Owing to the multiplication of horrors the three divisions of the Underworld are somewhat obscured, but this was evidently the Second division or Gate, for the knight was the second time given a chance of returning. The first time was in the Hall of Judgment, when the devils tried to coax him with offers of worldly honour. The third division is at the bridge itself.

³ As will be seen, this bridge linked the Underworld of Purgatory with Paradise, and not the latter with Heaven. It is probably therefore the second of the three bridges. It should be compared with the Brig o' Dred, which links the Underworld with Purgatory, and so is nearer to the Bridge Gaillar.

⁴ Compare with the Bridge, or Causeway, surrounded by smoke, in the Hung legend.

⁵ Compare the account of the Parsee bridge, from the crown of which evil souls are hurled by an old hag.

⁶ Compare the despair of Yoonecara when he was attacked by the giant insects, in the third section of his journey.

⁷ It should be noted that the bridge is over water, not fire, therein being similar to the tree-trunk bridge of Yoonecara, and the bridge of the three Buddhas in the Hung ritual.

and before long saw a great wall, which shone like gold and was full of precious tones. From over the wall came a spice-laden wind and all his troubles seemed at once forgotten. Next he perceived a fair gate,¹ and through it came a procession of noble looking men, who seemed like monks. They welcomed Sir Bwayne with gladness and song, and two of the leaders took him by the hand, thanking our Lord that He had kept him steadfast. He was then led within the golden wall, and found a beautiful meadow full of flowers and fruit trees, which seemed to have no end. Here it was always day, and the meadow was full of bright spirits, the souls of the righteous. The knight was told that this was the Earthly Paradise, lost by Adam, but its joys were not to be compared with those of Heaven.²

Finally he was led to a high hill³ and thence saw the gleaming, golden walls of Heaven itself. Thither men journeyed from Paradise when God summoned them; even as he had journeyed through Purgatory to them in Paradise, so they in Paradise were constantly changing. As his instructor was speaking there came a soft breeze from heaven which filled the Knight's soul with rapture, and he knew that henceforth sin could attract him no more. He was told that if he served God faithfully when he returned to earth he should in due course enter Heaven. He was then led out of the gates of Paradise and told that the fiends could no longer have power over him.

He set out on the return journey and, without any interference from the fiends, reached once more the cloistered hall which he had entered on coming into the Underworld. Here the twelve monks greeted him with delight, and told him that by his journey through St. Patrick's Purgatory he had cleansed away his sins.⁴ Proceeding up the long, dark passage which led him to the door into the Abbey, he found the Prior of St. Patrick and his monks awaiting him, who gave praise to God for his safe return. Afterwards the Knight went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and henceforth lived a most pious life, telling others of the joys of Paradise.

In considering this narrative we must bear in mind that the original sub-

¹The Gates of Paradise, near the Gateway of the Dawn.

²The Earthly Paradise, situated beyond the Mountains of the Dawn and in sight of the Mountain of Heaven. It should be compared with the Isle of the Blest in the Hung ritual, where the Five Ancestors were admiring the peach and the plum trees. It has also a strong analogy with the Elysian Fields in Virgil, and the similar fields in the Tuat.

³One of the hills in the east, near to the Mountains or Pillars of the Dawn, from which he could see the top of the Mountain of Heaven, above the clouds which would shut out the Kingdom of Men from his sight.

⁴Though there is no bridge leading out of the Underworld in this account the two gate-houses, or abbeys, at either end of this passage convey somewhat the same idea. "As above so below," the Abbey of St. Patrick on earth is represented in the Underworld by the Abbey on the threshold thereof, where the knight was received and from whence he was sent back after his journey. In like manner he was received into Paradise by a band of monks, and sent back by them with a blessing. Thus we get three bands of monks, (a) on Earth; (b) in the Underworld; (c) in Paradise, working in union to help the traveller. The dark passage may be regarded as an attenuated survival of the bridge into the Underworld.

division of the Underworld into three main parts has largely become submerged in a mass of gruesome details. Furthermore, the poet who co-ordinated the old legend was trying to combine in one place Purgatory and Hell. According to Mediæval beliefs anyone cast into Hell could never return, but Purgatory was a place of cleansing for a limited period, to fit men to enter Paradise; it was not the place of the damned. In this narrative, however, the two conceptions are intermingled, and it is clear that if at any spot Sir Owayne had failed to trust in Christ he would never have escaped at all. The place described is thus nearer to the old heathen Underworld than is Dante's Hell, which is essentially the place of those who are lost for ever.


The most outstanding feature in this story which corresponds with the Hung ritual is the Bridge which leads out of the Underworld into Paradise. Although superficially this may appear to have similarities with the Bridge of Iron and Brass whereon stood the Three Buddhas, a closer investigation will show that it corresponds with the incident called, "*leaping over the Fiery Ditch*," which in the version of the Hung ritual adopted by the *Three Dots Brotherhood* is symbolised by stepping over a fire, while the Bridge of Iron and Brass, which the Hung Heroes may not cross on foot, is not mentioned in that ritual. Its omission, however, is immaterial, since the three stepping stones are present, and on these each candidate has to place his feet after crossing the fire. We thus see that St. Patrick's bridge corresponds with the manner in which the Hung Heroes leap the Fiery Ditch "to the Sands of Peace," which clearly symbolise Paradise, and not the City of the Gods. Sir Owayne saw this Holy City but, unlike the Hung Heroes, never reached it. There are also faint traces of three stages and three testings in St. Patrick's Purgatory, which remind us of the three Gates in the Hung ritual. A consideration of this legend will show us that in the main it contains the same features as are found in the other traditions we have considered, although, as already pointed out, they are somewhat obscured by multiplication of detail, and we will now turn to consider the greatest of all such stories, Dante's Inferno.



THE SHIP AS A SYMBOL OF THE CHURCH.
FROM AN ENGRAVED GEM
OF THE 4TH CENTURY.

CHAPTER XIX.

DANTE'S 'INFERNO'.^(a)

 O do justice to this stupendous poem would require a book of several volumes, which would be quite out of place in this work. All that we can do here is to give the barest outline of the *Inferno* as envisaged by Dante, remembering that this is only one portion of his work, and that the *Purgatory* and *Paradise* are also parts of the same journey. It is important, however, to note the period of earthly time which is said to have elapsed while Dante was making his journey through the three worlds. It is supposed to begin on Good Friday, note the day, in 1300 A.D., when Dante was 35 years old, and it ends in Heaven on the first Sunday after Easter, making ten days in all, which fact should be compared with the ten days which the Hung boat takes to journey from the Black Dragon Mountain to the Isle of the Blest.

Dante emerged from Hell late in the evening of Quiet Saturday and began the ascent of the Mountain of Purgatory on Easter Day. This mountain, he says, was on the opposite side of the world from that part of the earth whereon man dwells, i.e., in the Pacific, but no doubt it originated from the Mountain of the Dawn, a fact emphasised by his reaching it on Easter Morning. As already pointed out, Paradise was thought to be near the Mountain of the Dawn, and so it was natural to assume that it was on a kind of table-land, the way to it being up the mountain which formed one of the pillars of the Gate of the Dawn.¹

Another fact worth noting is the emphasis Dante lays on the mystical number 3. Not only is the work divided into three main divisions, Hell, Purgatory and Heaven, but even the type of verse used is terza rima, or three-fold rhyme. In like manner the Chinese ritual is in triple rhyme and there, too, the number 3 plays an important part throughout. For example, 3, 21, and 72 continually occur. In Dante's case this partiality for the number 3 is no doubt due to his veneration for the Trinity, and in like manner the Hung triangle, representing Heaven, Earth, and Man, which we may regard as the Chinese Trinity, explains the like peculiarity. Throughout the whole of the Divine Comedy this basic number is never forgotten. The whole poem con-

¹There may, however, be some confusion between the Mountain of the Gods which was in the centre of the world and the lesser Mountain of the Dawn which was in the East.

(a) Cary's translation is the best known, but Longfellow's version, published by Routledge, contains many valuable notes, to which I owe much.

dicitur fuit ad dicitur in puer in mullino.
 Quia non fuit in mullino
 puerina col fuit in puer.
 tunc mullino pro si mullino.



THE END OF DANTE'S JOURNEY.

sists of 100 Cantos; Paradise and Purgatory each having 33, and Inferno 34, but in the case of the latter the first Canto is merely an Introduction, and should be disregarded, thus producing a third 33. The fact that our Lord's life is said to have covered 33 years no doubt influenced Dante when deciding what multiple of three he should adopt for the main theme.

When we concentrate on the Inferno itself we find that the three main divisions which we have previously noticed are strongly emphasised, despite the various sub-divisions which at first sight tend to obscure it. These three divisions are separated from each other by great spaces, and are those areas in which the sins of (1) Incontinence, (2) Malice, (3) Bestiality, are punished. Hell is conceived as a vast pit, arranged like an amphitheatre, and the various rings sink down to the frozen lake of Cocytus, which forms the arena. We will now summarise each Canto very briefly.

A SUMMARY OF THE INFERNO.

Canto I. This is Introductory, and in it Dante reaches a Mountain.¹

Canto II. The Journey begins.

Canto III. The Gate of Hell and the strand where the Indifferent dwell; those who are neither good enough for Heaven nor bad enough for Hell.² Crossing the river Acheron in the Ferry of Charon.³

Canto IV. The first Circle. Limbo and the dwelling place of the good pagans. The Castle of Philosophy.⁴

Canto V. The Second Circle. The place of the Wanton,—Minos.⁵

Canto VI. The Third Circle. The place of Gluttons,—Cerberus.

Canto VII. The Fourth Circle. The Avaricious and the Prodigal,—Plutus. The Fifth Circle. The place of the Irascible and Sullen. Crossing the Styx in the Ferry.⁶

Canto VIII. The Gate of the City of Dis.⁷

¹This is the mountain of Sunset, as Purgatory is the Mountain of Sunrise. It should be compared with Mount Avernus in Virgil and with the Black Dragon Mountain in the Hung Ritual.

²Compare with the strand on which, according to Virgil, the unburied wandered. The influence of Virgil on Dante was openly admitted by him, but whereas Æneas never ventured inside Dis, Dante does.

³The subterranean Ocean and the bridge, or ferry, into the Underworld.

⁴The first area, or Middle Land, which according to Dante is itself divided into three areas. The first circle is really the Elysian Fields of the Classical tradition, transferred hither to receive the Pagans, whom Dante, as a good Catholic, could not admit to Heaven, although he was too just to condemn them to torment.

⁵The just Judge of the Classical period has been transformed into a monster of Hell, but, as in Virgil, he still judges the lesser sins.

⁶This brings us to the second great division, or Second Gate of the Hung.

⁷The Infernal City: Helheim of the Norse; the City of Dis in Virgil, ruled by Radamanthus, and the City on the Isles of the Damned described by Lucian. It marks the frontier of the second great division.

THE HUNG SOCIETY.

Canto IX. The Furies, Dante enters the Gates of Dis and finds himself in the Sixth Circle, wherein the Founders of Heresies are tormented.

Canto X. Those therein.

Canto XI. A general description of the shape and divisions of Inferno.

Canto XII. The Seventh Circle. This contains the violent, especially tyrants.

Canto XIII. The Wood of Thorns, the place of Suicides.

Canto XIV. The Sandy Waste where the violent against God suffer. The four Infernal Rivers.

Canto XV. The violent against nature.

Canto XVI. The Cataract of the River of Blood.

Canto XVII. The violent against Art,—Usurers. Dante then comes to the third great division in the Pit itself.

Canto XVIII. Malebolge,¹ or the Eighth Circle. Here suffer the fraudulent. First sub-division: Seducers. Second Sub-division: Flatterers.

Canto XIX. The Third sub-division—Simoniacs.

Canto XX. The Fourth sub-division—Soothsayers.

Canto XXI. The Fifth sub-division—Peculators.

Canto XXII. Some famous Peculators.

Canto XXIII. The Sixth sub-division—Hypocrites.

Canto XXIV. The Seventh sub-division—Thieves.

Canto XXV. The Eighth sub-division—Evil Councillors.

Canto XXVI. Guido da Montefeltio.

Canto XXVII. Guido, continued.

Canto XXVIII. The Ninth sub-division—Schismatics.

Canto XXIX. The Tenth sub-division—Alchemists.

Canto XXX. Other Falsifiers or Forgers.

Canto XXXI. The Giants.

Canto XXXII. The Ninth and last Circle. The Frozen Lake of Cocytus. First sub-division—Traitors to their kindred. Second sub-division—Traitors to their country.

Canto XXXIII. Third sub-division—Traitors to their friends.

Canto XXXIV. Fourth sub-division—Traitors to their Benefactors. Lucifer. Judas Iscariot. The Journey down the Legs of Satan and so out on to the foot of the Mountain of Purgatory.²

Despite the mass of imagery and detail with which the old traditional framework has been overlaid, it will be found that Dante has maintained the ancient landmarks. It is worth remembering that in addition to Virgil he

¹This is really the third great division and is a huge pit descending to the frozen lake of Cocytus. Compare the pit mentioned in Virgil as the place into which Radamanthus sent the worst sinners. Compare also the pit mentioned in the legends of Sir Owayne and St. Brendon.

²The journey along the Legs of Lucifer may in a sense be regarded as similar to that made by Sir Owayne along the bridge which ultimately led him out of Purgatory into Paradise.

almost certainly knew of *The Vision of Frater Alberico*, which was written in Latin, towards the latter end of the 12th century, and contains an account of Hell, Purgatory and Paradise, with its seven Heavens. In addition he probably drew on Cicero's *Vision of Scipio*, which was known to Chaucer, who says of it, "Chapters seven it hath of Heaven and Hell."^(a) Before leaving the subject it is desirable to point out that there is a suggestion of a kind of bridge, or causeway, leading from circle to circle, in addition to the two ferry boats, which obviously symbolise bridges.

We may now summarise the ancient landmarks found in this great poem:—

(1). The Mountain of Sunset at the start and that of Sunrise at the end of the journey.

(2). Three great divisions.

(3). The Judgment Hall of Minos.

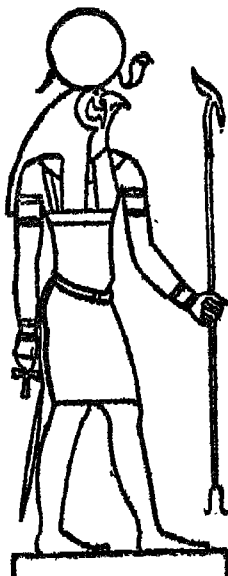
(4). The City of Hell.

(5). Two Ferry Boats and indications of a great Causeway, or Bridge, running right through the Underworld.

(6). The entrance at Sunset and coming forth into Day

Let us now turn to a fresco which shows that the Triad Bridge was also represented in English traditions of what befell the Dead, during the same period.

(a) On this subject see, Cancellieri, *Osservazioni Sopra l'Originalità di Dante*.
Wright, *St. Patrick's Purgatory*.
Ozanam, *Dante*.



RA: THE EGYPTIAN SUN GOD.

CHAPTER XX.

THE TRIAD BRIDGE AND THE BRIG O' DRED IN MEDIAEVAL DAYS.



FROM the story of St. Patrick's Purgatory we learnt that the Triad Bridges were represented in mediæval lore, but perhaps an even more striking example of the belief in these bridges is revealed by the fresco at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Chaldon, Surrey. This old fresco was re-discovered under a coat of whitewash in 1870, and had been painted about A.D.1200, in red tempera, probably by a monk of Chertsey Abbey. It depicts the Underworld and the ladder which leads thence to Heaven. The upper and underworlds are separated by a band, usually described as a band of clouds, but more probably intended to represent a section of the River of Ocean. In the right hand lower corner, i.e., in the Underworld, is the Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil, around the upper branches of which is wound a serpent. In its position it brings to mind Yggdrasil of the Norse, round which was entwined the Midgard Snake.

We next see the Brig o' Dred, shaped like a saw, which is supported by two devils. Across this souls are passing, which are usually described as being those of "Cheating Tradesmen." They are *five* in number, and judging from what they are carrying consist of a milkman, with a tithe of milk, two woolworkers, a mason and a smith. Underneath are the fires of Hell, in which a sinner, surrounded by his money bags, is being tormented, while on either side are other unfortunate victims, guarded by demons. In the centre is a ladder, which completely divides the fresco, and leads from the bottom of the Underworld to Paradise, represented by clouds, in the midst of which Christ can be seen. While some souls succeed in climbing up to Paradise, others fall off, or are pulled off by demons. In the left hand section a woman who fed her pets and ignored the poor is punished by having her hand gnawed by a dog, while in a huge cauldron two demons are boiling murderers, probably poisoners, hence this was the penalty inflicted on poisoners in the middle ages.

In the upper section, on the left hand side, we see Michael weighing souls, opposite a demon who is waiting to claim those who fail in the test, while three women who have passed the test (possibly the three Maries) are being led to the ladder by an angel. Above, an angel carries a soul, probably that of the penitent thief, straight into Paradise. On the right Christ Harrows Hell,ampling on Satan, and rescues the souls which are in bondage. An angel meanwhile helps two of them to climb up the *side* of the ladder, and it is suggested that these are Enoch and Elijah, "who never tasted death." At the

lower edge of the painting is the Consecration Cross. See illustration op. p. 160.

In this interesting old painting we obtain contemporary illustrations of several important incidents in the Mediæval Underworld which bear directly on our theme. The weighing of the soul calls to mind the similar weighing in the Tuat, where Anubis adjusts the balance instead of St. Michael, and Thoth, instead of an angel, stands ready to lead the acquitted away. On the other hand, the foul demon corresponds with the monster which in the Tuat sat waiting to destroy those who failed to pass the Test. In like manner in the Triad ritual we have the symbolic weighing of the candidate, by the Red Guard, near a fiery furnace.

The next important item which we recognise is the Bridge, the more so as it is over a fiery pit and near to a cauldron of boiling water. This reminds us of the experience of Sir Owayne in Sir Patrick's Purgatory, and moreover in this picture, as in the legend, there are demons actually under the bridge. Nor must we overlook the ladder, which is strikingly reminiscent of the one up which Osiris is said to have climbed into Heaven, and which thus corresponds with the bridge leading into Paradise. It must not be confounded with Jacob's ladder, on which Jacob saw only angels ascending and descending, not souls of men, neither did it stretch down into the Underworld.

An analysis of the souls in this picture, showing whether they are saved or not, proves interesting. In the right hand upper section Christ rescues ten from Hell, while two more are being helped up the side of the ladder. On the ladder itself only five seem to be ascending, all the others are falling into the Underworld. In the left upper section four are undoubtedly saved, one is being weighed, and one, behind the demon, is lost. In the left lower section at least fourteen are lost, on the ladder eight and on the right ten, unless those on the bridge may be considered as still on trial. Thus the number of lost is 88; of doubtful, one; and of saved 21; or roughly two saved for every three lost. There are, however, traces at the left hand edge of the picture of other figures, too badly damaged to include definitely, but suggesting that there are two or three other lost souls. It is worth noting that the hands of Satan (or Hell) are bound in front of him, downwards, so as to form a cross, probably to imply that his overthrow is due to the fact that Christ died on the cross, but it also brings to mind the Triad Sign for the element of wood.

THE RAINBOW BRIDGE.

Before leaving this fresco attention must be drawn to the illustration op. p. 142, wherein our Lord is seen seated on a Rainbow Bridge. The original is from a Book of Hours of the 15th century, and depicts the Resurrection and Judgment of the Dead. It will be noticed that the Rainbow Bridge stretches from earth to the Sacred Mountain, whereon the Saved are crowded together, while the Lost are falling into Hell. On the strand of the Ocean two or three souls are making the Sign of Fire, in an agonised appeal to Christ, and in at

least one case it seems to have been effective, for that soul is clearly being wafted across the water to join those who are saved.

It should also be noted that our Lord sits precisely on the crown of the bridge, exactly the same position as He occupies on the Rainbow Bridge in the fresco which decorates the Eastern wall of the Nave over the Chancel Arch in St. Thomas's Church, Salisbury. This fresco is 14th century work, and, considering that it was once covered by a liberal coat of whitewash, is in a remarkably fine state of preservation. In the foreground the dead are seen to be rising from their graves; those on His right being led by angels to Salvation, while those on the left are being taken by demons into the mouth of Hell, here represented by a monster. Among the saved at least two are making signs, one being the Triad sign of Fire, or distress, as in the previous picture, while the other is a sign denoting Preservation. A very curious feature of the work is the fact that on the right hand of the Christ the angels are lifting up a *tau* cross, while on the left appears a single pillar, which symbolise birth, and therefore rebirth, and may be reminiscent of the pillars in front of the Temple of King Solomon. Further interesting details can be detected by studying the reproduction opposite page 178.

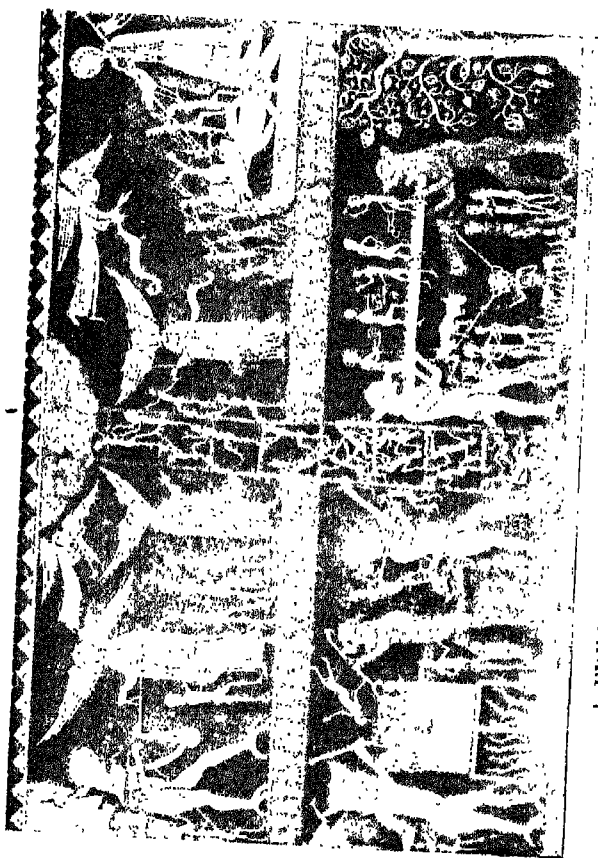
The tradition of the Bridge long survived the Reformation and lingered on in folk songs and dirges in the country districts. Perhaps the most famous of these dirges is the *Like-Wake Dirge*, which we shall consider in the next section, but before doing so let us compare the bridge in the Chaldon fresco with that mentioned in the *Like-Wake Dirge*. If we do this we cannot help suspecting that the *Winny Muir* is a corruption for the *Windy Moor* mentioned in St. Patrick's Purgatory, and that the good deeds which saved the soul were not the giving of hosen and shoon, but of clothes to the poor, which would then protect the soul from the icy blast, whereas the hosen and shoon appertain to the bridge, for without them no soul could pass over the spikes. Naturally, however, the giving of water was the most important of his good deeds when he reached the fire of Purgatory, for it would enable him to bear the heat. Let us hope that some day a complete version of the dirge will be discovered and enable us to settle these points.

THE LIKE-WAKE DIRGE.^(u)

That the traditional beliefs as to the Underworld lingered long, is shown by the survival in Lancashire into the 19th century of the *Like-Wake Dirge*,¹ which used to be sung round the corpse as it lay in its coffin in the house previous to burial. Worn down, as is usually the case with such survivals, it nevertheless retains some of the chief landmarks, including the bridge. Unfortunately,

¹Like-Wake means, *Corpse-watch*, from the old Saxon word, *Litch* or *Lyitch*, which still survives in the word *lytchgate*, i.e., the gate leading into the Church-yard, where the corpse was met by the clergy, who came thither in procession from the Church. *Litchfield* means, *Corpsefield*, because of the great battle which took place there in Saxon times.

^(u)Anon, from Scott's *Minstrelsy*.



A FRESKO AT CHALDON CHURCH, SURREY.
Showing the Brig O' Dread.

however, the verses which describe how the soul was expected to surmount this bridge are lost, but from those which do exist it is clear that the dead man must have qualified by doing some particular good deed. It is also significant that the good deeds are similar to those indicated in the *Negative Confession* of ancient Egypt, and that in like manner the Mahommedans consider that the true believers are enabled to cross their red-hot bridge by means of good deeds, which form a physical cushion to protect their feet from the heat.

The Dirge.

This æ night, this æ night,
Every night and alle;
Fire and salt and candle light¹
And Christ receive thy saule.

When thou from hence away art passed,
Every night and alle;
To Whinny-Muir thou comest at last:²
And Christ receive thy saule.

If ever thou gavest hosen and shoon,
Every night and alle;
Sit thee down and put them on,
And Christ receive thy saule.³

If hosen and shoon thou ne'er gave none,⁴
Every night and alle;
The Whinnies shall prick thee to the bare bone,
And Christ receive thy saule.

From Whinny-Muir when thou may'st pass,
Every night and alle;
To Brig O' Dred thou comest at last,
And Christ receive thy saule.

¹The lights were the corpse-candles which were placed round the corpse, and the other articles were also associated with the laying out. They imply that the proper ceremonies which enable the soul to enter the Underworld have been performed.

²Whinny-Muir means a moor covered with gorse. Compare with the wide waste in the legend of St. Patrick's Purgatory, and with that through which the Red Indian and his dog had to journey.

³This refrain calls to mind the power of Christ's Name in the legends of St. Patrick's Purgatory, and is no doubt a kind of incantation to help the soul to pass each danger. The Muir is the first district of the Underworld.

⁴Hose, or long stockings, and shoes. Here we see the old primitive custom of burying such articles with the dead man for his own use spiritualised into the belief that those who gave such things to the poor did but lend to the Lord, Who returned them when they most needed them in the Underworld.

THE HUNG SOCIETY.

(Here there is a hiatus, the next two verses being unfortunately lost).

From Brig O' Dred when thou may'st pass,
 Every night and alle;
 To Purgatory fire thou comest at last,
 And Christ receive thy saule.

If ever thou gavest meat or drink¹
 Every night and alle;
 The fire shall never make thee shrink,
 And Christ receive thy saule.

If meat and drink thou never gave none,
 Every night and alle;
 The fire will burn thee to the bare bone,
 And Christ receive thy saule.

This æ night, this æ night,
 Every night and alle;
 Fire and salt and candle light,
 And Christ receive thy saule.

The opening verse of this interesting Dirge is intended to convey to the soul the information that the proper ceremonies necessary to enable him to depart from the Strand and enter the Underworld have been performed. The remainder warns this brooding soul, which is awaiting its Christian burial, of the dangers which await it on its journey. It contains, moreover, a kind of mantra incorporating the Name of Christ, which will help the soul to surmount the chief dangers which threaten it, provided it has previously performed the necessary good works. The three districts of the Underworld are clearly indicated, the first being the great Muir, or Middle Kingdom; the second, the Pit of Hell, which is spanned by the Bridge; and the third, Purgatory. It should be noted that in this dirge the Bridge links the Underworld with Purgatory and not with Paradise, as was the case in the Legend of St. Patrick's Purgatory. In this it is nearer akin to Dante's account, wherein the bridge, consisting of the legs of Lucifer, led Dante out of Hell on to the foot of the Mount of Purgatory.

Unfortunately the dirge tells us nothing about the bridge itself and we are left in the dark as to whether it was a saw bridge, like that depicted at Chaldon, or merely a steep, narrow bridge, as described in St. Patrick's Purgatory. It

¹Compare Christ's words, "Whoso giveth a cup of cold water in My Name," and also the sentence in the Egyptian Negative Confession, "I have given food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty and clothes to the naked." See also the Judgment of the Dead by Christ as described in Matt. xxv. 31-46.

seems probable that it was originally a saw bridge, and that this characteristic was transferred to the Whinnies on the Muir at a time when the tradition as to the bridge had grown dim. If so, it may be that the Muir was, as in St. Patrick's Purgatory, a windy or wind-swept waste, and that the soul then put on any clothes that it had given to the poor, and only added the shoes at the bridge. Otherwise the "naked soul" had hose and shoes, meat and drink in the Underworld, but no clothing, which to the simple-minded would be unthinkable. Be that as it may, we see that even in its present, corrupt form the dirge retains the old Mediæval beliefs, despite the fact that the Reformation had officially swept away the idea of Purgatory.

In Mediæval days men thought that the body lay in the grave until it rose at the Judgment Day, but that the soul had an active, independent existence in the next world, in Hell, Purgatory, Paradise or Heaven, according to its deserts. At the last day the body was thought to rise and be reunited with the soul, thereby increasing its bliss or anguish. Many Protestant sects, like the Mahommedans, declared that the soul slept with the body until the Judgment Day and then went either to Hell or Heaven, thus eliminating the intermediate spheres of Purgatory and Paradise. For all that, despite the Reformation in England, we see that the old beliefs lingered on in the more remote parts of the country until at any rate the 19th century.

We have seen that in both the Monkish legends and the folk songs sung around the dead we have clear traces of the same set of beliefs as are found in the ceremonies of the Hung Society, and if we now turn to the romantic literature which beguiled the leisure of the Barons and courtiers of the Middle Ages, we shall find that the same framework forms an integral part of at least one important cycle of romance, namely that which centred round the Quest of the Holy Graal. As, moreover, the Quest is regarded as containing a very definite piece of mystical teaching, we may consider that these legends mark the point in the transmission of the ancient tradition when the old allegory of what befell man after death began to develop a further, inner meaning. Since the Hung Ceremonies also have a mystical interpretation we will turn and study the Graal legends with peculiar interest.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE GRAAL LEGEND AND THE JOURNEY THROUGH THE UNDER- WORLD.



THE Cycle of Graal Legends contains within itself a whole mass of Mediæval legendary lore, much of which seems to have come originally from pre-Christian traditions, which were later taken up and developed in a Christian and mystical direction by various writers of that period. Moreover, there are good reasons for suspecting that the Graal motif was in part an ancient initiation rite,^(a) connected with the old Fertility Cult, and curiously linked up with the Knights Templar. It is, however, abundantly clear that large sections of these tales are an allegory of the journey of the soul through the Underworld to Heaven. Perhaps one of the most useful versions of the Graal legend is that translated by Dr. S. Evans^(b) from the first volume of *Perceval le Gallois ou le Conte du Graal*, edited by M. Ch. Potvin, in 1886, from the M.S. numbered 11,145 in the library of the Dukes of Burgundy at Brussels. The M.S. was written in the opening years of the 16th century, but is copied from a work of about 1220 A.D., which is of special interest since in point of time it corresponds very closely with St. Patrick's Purgatory, and precedes Mallory by over 200 years.

The hero is Sir Perceval, the best knight in the world, and not Galahad, who is not even mentioned. Sir Perceval was the son of Alain li Gros, who had eleven brothers, all of whom had been slain before the story begins. We are also told that each of these knights lived for only twelve years after he was knighted. The father of Perceval died soon after the story begins, and henceforth Perceval is always spoken of as "The son of the widow lady," a most significant phrase. That there are strong astrological influences in the legend is shown by the reiterated references to twelve, which suggest that originally the twelve sons of Li Gros represented the twelve signs of the Zodiac through which the Sun, symbolised by Perceval, passes in the course of the year. These influences are emphasised by the fact that King Arthur¹ decided to hold his Court, not at Whitsuntide, as was his wont, but at St. John in Summer, a festival which marks the Summer Solstice.

We meet with strange people in this story, King Fisherman, King Hermit

¹In this version of the old story Arthur is depicted as a weak, capricious Sovereign who, although he started well, after a time fell into sloth and sin, so that all honourable Knights forsook his Court.

(a)See, J. S. M. Ward, *Who was Hiram Abiff?* p. 165 sq.
J. L. Weston, *The Quest of the Holy Graal*.

(b)See Dr. S. Evans, *The High History of the Holy Graal*. Everyman Ed.

and the Maiden of the Car, who carried her arm in a sling in such wise that she made an ancient sign, namely right hand on left shoulder.¹ Our main interest, however, centres in the adventures of Sir Gawain, Sir Lancelot and Sir Perceval. We will begin with Sir Gawain, who appears first in the story and who, though he sees the Holy Graal, partly fails in his quest because he does not ask the necessary question. His journey is of special interest as it represents a journey overland through the Underworld, to the Holy City, and therein is similar to the adventures of Sir Owayne. In like manner, Sir Lancelot goes overland, but when we come to Sir Perceval we find that in part, at least, he goes in the Solar Barque and to some extent is comparable with the tradition of St. Brendon's Voyage.

THE JOURNEY OF SIR GAWAIN.

For our purpose we can largely ignore Sir Gawain's earlier adventures, except to note that he met the Damsel of the Car and her two attendant maidens, and that his armour and shield were old and rusty,^(a) while his horse was a sorry screw.² They entered a hideous forest³ and passed by the castle of the Black Hermit.⁴ This was a terrible and evil place, and they heard those who were incarcerated therein crying out for "the best knight in the world to come and rescue them." The Damsel of the Car warned Sir Gawain that he could do nothing against the Black Hermit or his Knights, and he had to stand by impotently while a band of knights from the castle despoiled the Car of its burden.

They then passed on, but before they were out of sight a knight sallied forth and challenged Sir Gawain, who overthrew him and took from him the shield of that good knight Judas Macabee, which had a golden eagle on a red field. Soon after Sir Gawain parted company with the Damsel and, after sundry adventures, reached the castle of the Widow Lady,⁵ who was the Mother

¹This sign is of great antiquity and in India is associated with Vishnu, while we also find it depicted in the papyri of the *Book of the Dead*. It was also a sign used by the Carbonari, a secret society in Italy, but to us the most interesting fact is that it is depicted being made by a figure sculptured on the south side of the West door of the Cathedral of San Lorenzo, at Genoa. The work is of about 1200 and the significant fact is that it was in this cathedral that the Knights Templar and other leaders of the fourth Crusade entered into a Treaty with the Doge of Genoa, whereby they agreed to attack Constantinople before going on to the Holy Land. The Graal legends, and this version in particular, show the influence both of the Crusading spirit and of the Knights Templar in particular, (See, *Who Was Hiram Abiff?* p. 168) and this sculpture is thus contemporary with an important Templar incident and with the actual M.S. we are now studying. See illus. op. p. 166.

²That is, he was clad in the garments of sorrow and humility, which befitted one who is travelling through the Underworld. The Car may possibly be reminiscent of the Car of the Sun.

³The Western part of the Middle Land in the Underworld.

⁴The Pit of Hell, as we learn later, and the dwelling place of Satan.

⁵This reminds us of the Abbey in St. Patrick's Purgatory, a place where good people succour those who are passing through the Underworld, although here it is placed in a different geographical position, namely East of the City of Hell.

(a) Branch II. Title 2.

of Sir Perceval, the best knight in the world. Here he was hospitably received and soon after overthrew the Knight of the Red Shield, named Chaos, the Red, and also the King of the Moors.¹ By this victory he gained a respite of a year for the Widow Lady, who was in peril from this King, and left her protected by her five knights.²

Branch IV deals with sundry other unpleasant experiences of Sir Gawain the nature of which indicate that he is supposed to be in the Eastern half of the Middle Kingdom of the Underworld. The most important of these is in Title 7, where we are told of his adventures in the Castle of the Proud Maiden.³ Here he was shown three tombs and was told that they were prepared for the three best knights in the world, namely himself, Sir Lancelot and Sir Perceval. He also discovered that the Proud Maiden had set a trap to slay them all, so he quietly escaped, whereupon the Maiden bade fifteen knights to pursue him, but they said that it would be of no avail. Thereon she cried out, that she had thereby lost the three knights for ever.⁴

After various other mystical adventures Sir Gawain reached "A Spring that ran with a great rushing,"⁵ and found an old hermit with "a shield with a sun thereon."⁶ He was told that it belonged to a sick knight (Sir Perceval), but the hermit would not let him see the invalid.^(a) Next he came to the castle of King Fisherman, which marked the entry into his realm, but the guardians of the castle would not let him enter until he had brought thither the sword which slew St. John the Baptist, which was in the hands of a "Misbelieving King."

So Sir Gawain turned back and set forth to seek this sword and after sundry minor adventures⁷ reached the Land of King Gurgalain, the misbelieving king who held it.^(b) The king showed him the sword and promised to give it to him if he would rescue his son, who had been carried off by a giant. At high Noon this sword always sweated blood, for it was at that hour that St. John

¹These represent powerful Demon Rulers of the Underworld.

²Note the mystic number 5, no doubt here representing the five senses. These five knights should be compared with the five ancestors of the Hung ritual.

³This clearly refers to spiritual pride, which destroys many, and if possible will destroy even the best and holiest men.

⁴This passage is curiously reminiscent of a Masonic legend wherein fifteen fellow-crafts went out to hunt for three villains, although the characters of the respective parties are reversed. There are several incidents of Masonic interest in the *High History* which are deserving of more detailed study than can be given here. With regard to the three Knights, there is probably a lunar reference to the three dark nights when the moon is invisible, and the fifteen days of its rising from crescent to full moon. Esoterically, however, Sir Lancelot represents the body, Sir Gawain, the soul, and Sir Perceval, the spirit.

⁵The waters of the Underworld River of Ocean, passing out again in the East.

⁶Denoting the place where the sun comes forth again in the East to dawn upon men.

⁷It is clear that these took place in the Eastern part of the Underworld.

^(a)Branch V, Title 4.

^(b)Branch VI, Title 4.



THE PORCH OF ST. LORENZO, GENOA.

was slain.¹ Gawain went to the castle of the giant and slew him, but failed to save the life of the boy, whom the giant strangled. Sir Gawain brought back the boy's corpse and the head of the giant to the king, who gave him the sword, but cut up the dead body of his son, boiled it and distributed it among his own knights that they might eat it. After this he was baptised.²

Having performed his task, Sir Gawain set out and reached the castle of King Fisherman at Noon, and found that the name of the castle was, *The Castle of Inquest*, because whatever a man asked therein would be answered.^(a) He therefore asked what the Castle of the Black Hermit might be and was told that it represented Hell, and that the Black Hermit was Lucifer. He was also given an explanation of many of his other adventures, which have a mystical or allegorical significance of a Christian character.

Leaving the castle, he proceeded on his way and found the land through which he journeyed to be the fairest he had ever seen.³ He had to pass over three bridges, each of which spanned a moat. The first was a bow shot in length and a foot wide, and was called, *The Bridge of the Eel*, but as soon as he tried to cross it it became wide enough for him to pass:⁴ this proved to be a draw-bridge and lifted itself after he had crossed it. The second bridge seemed to be made of ice and was very frail, but when he rode on it, it became strong and fair and he saw that it was adorned with images. This likewise rose behind him as he travelled forward towards the third bridge, which was made of marble and gold. As he was about to cross this he glanced back and found, to his amazement, that the other two bridges had vanished. He passed over the last bridge without fear and reached the gate of the castle, which had on it images of gold and gems.⁵ The castle itself, the fairest and richest in the world, was likewise adorned with gold and gems, and in the hall he found a chess-board⁶ with pieces of gold and silver, but these were not upon the board. The hall itself was brilliantly lighted without candles, although it was now night.

¹This sword should be compared with the Precious Sword of the Triad, which was obtained from the grave of a man who had been treacherously slain. The tradition that St. John was slain at Noon is also significant, for there is a wide-spread belief that at that hour a man is at his weakest. See Vol. I., P. 148.

²The giant should be compared with Giant Despair in Bunyan. The grisly banquet is of great significance as harking back to very ancient usages. For example, in the Dionysiac Rites, originally a man, and later a bull, symbolising the god, was torn to pieces and eaten by the worshippers. For a full consideration of this incident see, *Who was Hiram Abiff?* p. 170.

³Namely, Paradise.

⁴Compare with what happened to the bridge in St. Patrick's Purgatory. The three bridges bring to mind the three stepping stones in the Hung ritual.

⁵Clearly indicating that it represents the Holy City, and the gate is therefore similar to the gate of the City of Willows. The three moats remind us of the Waters of the Three Rivers, and the fair land corresponds with the Island of the Blest. The three bridges represent the bridge of iron and brass, concerning which we are told in the ritual that though it now has only two planks, it once had three.

⁶This reminds us of the checker board of nights and days, and of the mosaic pavement, or black and white carpet, used in certain initiation rites.

(a) Branch VI. Title 10.

He was led to the bed-chamber of King Fisherman,^(a) who could not rise because of his sickness but greeted him with joy, and to him Gawain presented the sword which slew St. John. The King begged him to remember to ask concerning what he would see in the Banquet Hall. On entering the latter he was greeted by twelve ancient knights,¹ who again reminded him to ask the question. Two damsels entered, one bearing the Holy Graal and the other the Spear which pierced our Lord's side. Sir Gawain also thought that he saw two angels bearing two golden candlesticks as the procession passed into the Chapel. "Messire Gawain is thoughtful, and so great a joy cometh to him that nought remembereth he in his thinking save of God only," whereat the Knights were most sorrowful. The procession returned from the Chapel and now there seemed to be three damsels, but again he was tongue-tied. The third time the procession passed, but still he failed to put the vital question. Then the knights departed and he found himself locked in the hall and, glancing round, saw that the chess men had been set out, and "they of the gold played against him" and mated him thrice.²

Next morning Gawain was sent forth from the castle which "is ever at war with the King of the Castle Mortal." On his return journey he was followed by a tempest of rain, which fell on him alone, till he reached another bridge. This befell him because he had failed to ask the question concerning the Holy Graal. The rest of the adventures of Sir Gawain lie outside the framework of the Hung Ceremony, and we will therefore summarise what we have found in this part of the *High History*.

THE MEANING OF THE ALLEGORY.

Sir Gawain went overland, and not by boat. He entered the Underworld and passed, but could not penetrate into, the City of Dis, in this being similar to Æneas. Beyond this City, that is in the Eastern part of the Middle Kingdom of the Underworld, he found the castle of the Widow Lady, sore oppressed, and also a tomb which only the best knight in the world could open. He then came to the Waste Lands of Hell mentioned in St. Patrick's Purgatory, and fought with a Knight, Chaos the Red, a most appropriate title for a representative of Powers of Evil. From there he travelled to the Underworld River of Ocean where it rushes out in the *East*, and found thereby a hermit and the shield with the Sun thereon, which latter clearly indicated that he had passed out of the Underworld into the light, at the spot where the Sun rose. After that he reached the castle which marks the borders of Paradise, not the Holy City, and was there turned back until he had proved that he was

¹The mystic number 12. Compare the twelve Apostles, etc.

²In the ancient Egyptian story of *The Adventures of Satni-Khamois with the Mummies*, Satni plays three games with the Mummy, all of which he loses. See, Sir G. Maspero, *Popular Stories of Ancient Egypt*, p. 188.

(a) Branch VI. Title 16.

worthy to enter by bringing hither the sword of St. John. He therefore had to return to the Eastern part of the Middle Kingdom of Hell, where most of his further adventures occurred.

Having obtained the sword he returned to the East, reached Paradise, whose outer guard, corresponding to the wall in the Legend of St. Patrick's Purgatory, is here called the Castle of Inquest. Thereafter he passed through the smiling meads of Paradise till he came to the bridges, which correspond with the Rainbow Bridge in the Norse account and with the Bridge of Iron and Brass in the Triad rituals. The triple moats correspond with the three rivers, i.e., the River of Clouds, the River of Ocean and the Underground River, which all unite at this point in the East, and they are thus strictly analogous with the Waters of the Three Rivers in the Hung ceremony. The Castle of King Fisherman is the Holy City itself, whose gate, like the gate of the City of Willows, is specifically mentioned.

We thus see that this part of *The High History of the Holy Graal* corresponds with the Hung Ceremony and represents the passage on foot through the Underworld. It is on somewhat similar lines to the adventures of Sir Owayne, but we shall see later that other forms of the framework deal with the journey of the Solar Barque, and are also to be found in the *High History*. Moreover, it is a most valuable link in the chain which gradually transforms the theme of the journey of the soul through the Underworld into a mystical allegory. The *High History* itself is much nearer the original form of the tradition than is the version found in *The Morte d'Arthur*. Moreover, the author of the *High History* from time to time carefully explains certain details of the symbolism, and indicates quite clearly that he is using this ancient framework. For example, he says, significantly, that the Castle of the Black Hermit is Hell and that the Black Hermit himself is Lucifer.

CHAPTER XXII.

SIR LANCELOT SEES THE HUNG BOAT.



ET us next consider the story of Sir Lancelot, who mystically represents the body and who, therefore, never succeeds in seeing the Graal. After sundry adventures this knight crossed a great bridge¹ and came^(a) to the gateway of a castle whose door was covered with beards.² Then two knights came forth and demanded that he should give them his beard as a toll, a request which he indignantly refused, and after a desperate fight he slew one and wounded another. Thereupon the Lady of the Castle came out and invited him to enter, which he did, and found that it was a dolorous place. At the banquet the first course was brought in "by knights in chains that had their noses cut off": the second "by knights in chains that had their eyes put out": the third course was served by chained knights "that had but one hand," and the fourth by knights who had lost one foot. The fifth course was brought in by knights who bore naked swords in their hands and who were promptly slain. The lady then turned to him and said, "You have seen the justice and the lordship of my Castle. All these knights have been conquered at the passing of my door."³ She then offered him the lordship of this Castle if he would stay with her, but he refused saying that he was on the way "to the Castle of Souls."⁴ Hereupon one of the damsels who waited upon the Lady of the Castle told him bluntly that he would never see the Holy Graal because he loved Guenievre, the wife of his Sovereign Lord, King Arthur.

After leaving the castle other adventures followed, indicative of the nature of the country he was crossing, until we are told that he "findeth a Waste land, a country broad and long, wherein wonned⁵ neither beast nor bird, for the

¹Here we have adventures in the Western half of the Middle Kingdom of the Underworld, and the bridge is that which connects the Western Strand with the Middle Kingdom.

²A toll, or fee, demanded by the Lords of the Underworld for permission to cross the bridge. According to ancient beliefs if an evilly disposed person could obtain the hair of another he could by magic arts inflict what ill he chose upon him. This incident should be compared with the precaution taken in the Hung ritual to ensure the fidelity of candidates by taking a piece of their hair at the very beginning of the ceremony. Sir Lancelot's determination not to surrender his beard was thus dictated by even more powerful reasons than mere self-respect.

³The above facts show that we are in Hell and among the souls in bondage, while the five orders of Knights clearly refer to the sins of the five senses.

⁴A most significant phrase.

⁵Wandered.

(a)*The High History*. Branch VII, Title 5.

land was so poor and parched that no victual was to be found therein. Then he saw a great city, all in ruins, and when he came there he passed by a palace in which people made sad dole for a knight who had to die." This knight came out and demanded that Lancelot should chop off his head with an axe, otherwise he would fight him. For some time Lancelot tried to dissuade him from his purpose, but at length the knight made him promise not only to behead him but to return a year hence and in like manner place his own in jeopardy.¹ At length Sir Lancelot struck off his head, when, to his amazement, both it and the body vanished ^(a)

After this episode the Story of Sir Lancelot breaks off for a while and we are told some of the adventures of Sir Perceval, but ultimately, in Branch X, Sir Lancelot and Sir Perceval meet and fight without recognising each other. They are parted by King Hermit, both being severely wounded, but Lancelot's wound takes longest to heal and when he does set out again he comes to the Castle of an old Knight who, with his two daughters, is threatened by another knight. This knight arrived outside the gates at Noon² and blew five blasts on his horn as a challenge. Sir Lancelot overthrew him and spared his life on condition that he undertook not to attack the castle again.

Proceeding, Lancelot came to a great city whose citizens demanded that he should become their king saying, "This city began to burn . . . from the very same hour that our king was dead, nor might the fire be quenched . . . until such time as we have a king that shall be lord of the city . . . and on New Year's Day it behoveth him to be crowned in the midst of the fire, and then shall the fire be quenched . . ." Sir Lancelot tried to decline this honour, but the people would not let him go and pleaded that one man must be prepared to sacrifice himself to save a whole city.³ A dwarf then appeared and said that he would take the crown on the conditions laid down, and therefore Sir Lancelot was allowed to go.

Several lesser adventures followed and ultimately Sir Lancelot came to a river in a fair mead and saw a great boat,⁴ and within it two knights, a damsel, on whose knees rested a third knight, while at the feet of the latter sat a second damsel, making five persons in all. There was also one who rowed the boat and another who was catching fish.⁵ These people told Sir Lancelot that there

¹Compare the Irish legend of Cuchalan.

²The mysterious hour of Noon again, and it should be noted that the challenger blows five blasts, i.e., he calls to the five senses.

³This is part of the City of Dis. The episode is also of interest as it shows a dim remembrance of customs which once prevailed in Syria and elsewhere, whereby the King was regarded as an Incarnate God. At intervals such kings were slain, often by fire, in order that the Divine Incarnation might pass to a new and stronger body. For fuller details, see, *Who was Hiram Abiff?*—Ward.

⁴The Solar Barque, or the boat of the Hung Ritual.

⁵There are five men and two women, making seven in all. Perhaps the five men represent the physical senses and the two damsels, intuition and inspiration, the two higher and super-physical senses.

(a) Branch VI. Title 18.

was a Castle beyond the Mountain¹ which belonged to King Fisherman.² So he rode on until he came to the three draw-bridges, which he passed without much difficulty,³ and so through the gate. He found King Fisherman, who was still an invalid, and told him that the first knight who came to his castle and failed to ask the question was none other than Sir Perceval. As the latter was King Fisherman's nephew the King expressed his surprise and regret that he had not recognised him at the time, and begged Sir Lancelot to send him thither as soon as ever he met him again. Although Sir Lancelot partook of the feast,⁴ as had the other knights, yet because of his sinful love of Guenievre the Graal did not appear to him, and so next day he departed sorrowfully from the Castle. His further adventures do not affect the framework we are considering, and it is only necessary to mention that he visited King Hermit and after reporting to him all his adventures returned to the Court of King Arthur.

It may be convenient here to indicate briefly the symbolic nature of each of the three knights whose adventures we are considering. Sir Lancelot represents the body, which, because of its animal passion, cannot see the Graal. Sir Gawain represents the soul, which is able to see the Graal but cannot ask the question, that is, interpret correctly the spiritual experience through which it is passing, whereas Sir Perceval is the Divine Spirit within us, which alone can achieve the end of the Quest.⁵

The framework revealed in the adventures of Sir Lancelot, although very similar to that met with in the story of Gawain, supplies certain details which are lacking in the latter. For example, we obtain a picture of the entrance to the Underworld, and more especially of the bridge which leads to that realm

¹This represents the Mountains of the Dawn.

²The Castle represents the Holy City, or City of Willows.

³These bridges, as already indicated in the story of Sir Gawain, represent the Rainbow Bridge, which links the Earthly Paradise with the Holy City.

⁴Note that each knight who reached the Holy City partook of a feast therein. Compare this with Yonecara's humble feast on a similar occasion. The Triad ceremony also ends with a feast.

⁵There is another interpretation of these three knights which, while not contradicting that in the text, is equally valid, for the Graal Legends undoubtedly have meanings within meanings. According to this other interpretation the three heroes represent souls in different stages of evolution, and therefore not equally able to comprehend the inner meaning of the experiences through which they were passing. Lancelot represents the soul just groping towards the Light, but still very materialistic and so, though he reaches the Graal Castle, he can never see the Graal itself, that is, understand the inner meaning of an initiation ceremony. Gawain sees the Graal and is therefore a more evolved soul, who is able to understand to a limited extent the inner meaning but does not fully comprehend everything. Perceval is fully evolved and comprehends the full meaning. Moreover, we have a trace of the time when Perceval was still in the Gawain stage, namely in the incident which relates that he saw the Graal but did not ask the question. Thereafter he sets out to make amends and thereby gains further experiences, which enable him to evolve sufficiently to achieve the Quest. We thus, as it were, obtain glimpses of him in two cycles of initiation.

It will be noted that Sir Perceval, having obtained during his first "initiation" the experiences Gawain is only painfully acquiring during the story, is an "Adept," possessing powers unknown to Gawain. So as we pursue the story we feel there is something elusive about Sir Perceval, who flashes in and out of the picture and takes, or leaves, the Graal Boat at will.

and the first gate thereof. Most of Sir Lancelot's adventures are West of the City of Dis, here represented by the burning city, whereas most of Gawain's took place after he had passed the City of Dis. Moreover, Gawain saw only the outside, which he called the Castle of the Black Hermit, but Sir Lancelot seems to have entered at least a part of it, although as he does not describe it as a Castle it must be supposed that he saw it from a different standpoint. Lancelot also saw the Solar Barque, but did not enter it, and he passed into Paradise so easily that he hardly noticed the fact, whereas at the first attempt Gawain was turned back at the gates. Sir Lancelot was set no hard task and paid no fee for admission, but neither did he obtain an interpretation of the meaning of his adventures, and although he entered the Holy City he gained no profit thereby for he was not even permitted to see the Holy Graal.

The key to the whole mystery is that while Gawain loved, and therefore saw, Holy things, Lancelot loved the Queen more than the Graal—and he had his reward accordingly. It is Sir Perceval, however, the Divine Spark, or rather the Christ Spirit in man, which achieves the Graal at last, and in the process harrows Hell, i.e. the Castle of the Black Hermit. Let us therefore turn to consider Sir Perceval's adventures, and in doing so remember that in the earlier part of the story they overlap those of Sir Lancelot—the body. Moreover, they show Sir Perceval, the Spirit, in direct conflict with Sir Lancelot, the body, as symbolised by the fight between the two. Nor must we overlook the fact that Sir Perceval had seen the Graal and lost it. The Divine Spark was with God before it entered flesh and laments its separation from Him, whereas Body and Soul were never Divine. This is indicated in the story by the fact that neither Sir Lancelot nor Sir Gawain had seen the Graal before they set out on their adventures. The Body never can see the Divine, the Soul may obtain a glimpse of it, but the Spirit shall achieve it, for it does but return whence it came, i.e. from God back to God.

Thus the framework of the Underworld not only depicts the journey of man after death, but also the mystical experiences of man in his quest of God during life, which phrase means comprehension of, and ultimately union with, the Supreme Being. As the Hung ritual has a similar double meaning this explanation will be helpful in endeavouring to understand the mystical meaning of the Hung journey. Furthermore, the Graal legends mark a very definite tendency to use the framework more and more for mystical teaching, a tendency which by the time of Bunyan had almost completely submerged the older allegory of the journey of the dead.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SIR PERCEVAL AND SIR GALAHAD IN THE MYSTIC BARQUE.

IT is impossible to give in detail the adventures of Sir Perceval, nor is it necessary, since he traversed the same territory as did the other two knights, but with this noticeable difference, *he* comes from the East into the Underworld, therein being similar to the Vanguard in the Hung ritual. Sir Perceval, having failed to ask the question when he saw the Holy Graal pass, had to go out into the Underworld and, as it were, make reparation by subduing the evil spirits therein and rescuing the souls who were in bondage. In short, he represents the descent of the Divine Spark from Heaven to Earth and its return whence it came. Many of his deeds call to mind Avalokitesvara's who, in the Buddhist tradition, rescued the souls who were in bondage, and to some extent his journey can be compared with the setting out of the Abbot from his monastery to the Court at Peking in order to overthrow the Eleuths.

Moreover, unlike the other knights, who go on foot, he is constantly described as journeying in a boat, whose mystical nature is again and again indicated. Perhaps its similarity to the Solar Barque,¹ and therefore to the Hung boat, is most closely shown in that section which describes how King Arthur, just before dawn, sees a mysterious boat come rushing towards his Palace. Great stress is laid on the fact that it has a light and therein are only two persons, Sir Perceval and a venerable helmsman, who immediately brings to mind the Captain of the Hung Boat. Among his numerous adventures is the capture of the Castle of King Hermit, which we have already seen represents the City of Dis wherein reigns Satan, while the Bridge which Gawain crossed to the Castle of King Fisherman, and which we saw represented the Rainbow Bridge or the two-plank bridge of the Hung ritual, has been multiplied into nine bridges, over each of which he has to fight his way.

Later we learn how the Hallows, and especially the Holy Graal, are lost, owing to the Capture of the Castle of King Fisherman by the Powers of Evil, and of their subsequent restoration after the recapture of the Castle by Sir Perceval. Herein we are forcibly reminded of the ten precious objects which the Hung ritual states were lost, and which were of a distinctly religious nature, such as the Temple Bell and the Rosary, while the Precious Censer, which was one of the objects which vanished, bears more than a superficial

¹See Volume III for a consideration of the relation between the Solar Barque and the Boat of Souls.

resemblance to the Graal itself. Finally, his tasks completed¹ and his work ended, Sir Perceval set sail in the mysterious boat of the Graal and was never seen again.

THE MORTE D'ARTHUR.

In like manner everyone conversant with Mallory's version of the Graal Quest will recognise the important part the Graal ship plays in the tradition, more especially in the last journey of Galahad, Perceval and Sir Bors when they accompanied the Holy Graal to a mysterious City on the coast of Africa. Although this city was in the hands of an evil king, on his overthrow Sir Galahad became king and reigned there for a short space of time. By his day the old tradition had become hopelessly confused, but in this City we have the last faint reflection of the Holy City of Zion, where the Graal shines forth supreme. There is yet another significant occasion when the Solar Barque, or Boat of Souls, appears in *The Morte d'Arthur*, namely, at the death of the great King himself.

"Then Sir Bedivere took the king upon his back, and so went with him to that water side. And when they were at the water side, even fast by the bank hove a little barge with many fair ladies in it, and among them all was a queen, and all they had black hoods, and all they wept and shrieked when they saw King Arthur. 'Now put me in the barge,' said the king. And so he did softly . . . then they rowed from the land, and Sir Bedivere . . . cried: 'Ah, my lord Arthur, what shall become of me, now ye go from me and leave me here alone among mine enemies?' 'Comfort thyself,' said the king, 'and do as well thou mayest, for in me is no trust for to trust in,'² for I will unto the Vale of Avilion³ to heal me of my grievous wound: and if thou hear never more of me, pray for my soul.'⁽⁴⁾

The boat is obviously on its way to the Earthly Paradise. According to the version Mallory prefers, Arthur never reached the Earthly Paradise, but died on the way, although he admits that an alternative version of the story existed which related that Arthur reached that happy land and would one day return to earth, healed of his wound, and "win the Holy Cross." It should be noted that in the boat were three Queens, and Nimue, the Lady of the Lake,

¹There is a certain striking analogy between Perceval and the Vanguard in the Hung Ritual, for just as Sir Perceval has been on the Quest before (see notes p. 172) so we are told the Vanguard has been allowed back in life to search for Heroes to avenge injuries. (See Vol. I. Note 1, p. 58) This implies that he is taking the journey for a second time, as was Sir Perceval, and like him helps others.

²The answer of the king shows clearly that he is going a journey no ordinary mortal can take, otherwise he would never have deserted his staunch friend. Only the dying could enter the Boat of Souls.

³Avilion is clearly a synonym for the Earthly Paradise where, according to tradition, the Tree of Life still flourished, but Arthur never reached it.

⁽⁴⁾Mallory, *Morte d'Arthur*. p. 389. Everyman ed.

and so, with Arthur himself, there was the mystic number 5, representing, perhaps, the five senses.

In the course of this volume we have seen that the allegory of the journey of the soul through the Underworld towards the City of the Gods, while taught in considerable detail in a number of Mystery Rites, such as the Hung Society, has also worked its way into Mediæval romances and primitive folktales and, as we shall see in a subsequent chapter, has not been without its influence on the Fairy Lore of Western Europe. It should also be realised that the Graal legends themselves appear to be relics of an old Initiation Rite, concerning which a certain amount of information percolated outside the close-barred door of the Temple of Initiation. It is, moreover, highly probable that this Rite was connected with the Templars, but as I have discussed this matter fully in another work¹ it is not necessary to go over the ground again. It is desirable, however, to stress the fact that even in the *High History* the allegory of the journey of the soul through the Underworld is being used to inculcate a distinct type of mystical teaching, and as in the third volume I shall show that the whole of the Hung ceremony is capable of a similar mystical interpretation, this point is of importance to us in our examination of the whole problem. Furthermore, this mystical interpretation is the direct inspiration of Bunyan's great allegory, so that we can say that by the end of the 17th century the original allegory had been transformed, and although we can recognise the framework of the journey through the Underworld, Bunyan's intention was not to teach his readers what befell a soul after death, but to describe the mystical development of a symbolical man called *Christian*. His use of such a framework also indicates the source of inspiration from which a number of Masonic Rites have drawn. These, like the Hung Rite, are still secret initiation ceremonies, but their mystical meaning is very similar. They have not been drawn from the *Pilgrim's Progress*, a fact clear to anyone who is acquainted with them, indeed they are nearer to the Hung ritual in many points than is the open teaching given by Bunyan. Naturally here one must speak with considerable reticence, but if I merely mention the names of the degrees involved members thereof should have little difficulty in recognising the striking parallels which occur.

MASONIC PARALLELS.

The Royal Arch with its pendant the Excellent Master, as worked in Scotland; the Knights Templar and the Knights of Malta: the Rose Croix, the Red Cross of Babylon, and, above all, the Royal Order of Scotland, deal in part, or entirely, with the same framework as does the Hung Ritual. In order to avoid disclosing secrets to those not entitled to know them I do not propose to be too specific, and instead of mentioning these degrees will use as symbols certain letters of the alphabet, which are not even arranged in the

¹Ward, *Who Was Hiram Abiff?* pp. 158-172.

same order as the degrees given above. I feel, however, if I say that a certain detail of the Hung ceremony is represented in a degree denominated by a certain letter, those who are members of that degree cannot fail to recognise the resemblance.

The veils found in degree A clearly correspond with the three Hung Gates and the entrance into a Hung Lodge. The same gates are represented in degree B by the three rooms required in the ceremony, and the candidate enters the Mansions of Bliss by means of a ladder, which represents the Bridge of Iron and Brass in the Triad ceremony. The passing of five banners in degree C reminds us forcibly of the Hung Gates, and even more of the manner in which the candidate has to pass under five arches, or tressels, in *The Three Dots Society*, while the manner in which the Hung candidates confirm their oaths by extinguishing lighted joss sticks, or torches in the case of candidates in *The Three Dots Society*, brings to mind a similar ceremony in degree D. The fact that in this degree we meet with Generals, Knights, banners and all the paraphernalia of a military organisation, is another curious feature. In degree E we get the bridge of the Triad ritual specifically mentioned, and in it this bridge plays a very important part, forming, indeed, the kernal of the whole ceremony, whereas it is only one of many features found in degree F,—the real antiquity of which, quite apart from the framework, is revealed by its being written very largely in old border verse.¹ Nor must we forget that despite the appearance of Scriptural influences, these passages have been carefully chosen to describe the ancient landmarks.² We may talk of Mount Moriah and of another, and later, mountain, but these are, after all, but new names for our old friends, the Mountain of Sunset and the Mountain of Dawn. For the benefit of my brethren I will now tabulate the essential framework, using, however, the names employed in the other traditions, and not those of the Order, thus enabling them to follow the theme without disclosing the chief incidents to outsiders.

The Mountain of Sunset is followed by a journey contrary to the Sun, which leads to three gates of the Underworld, which can only be passed by those in possession of the requisite words of power. The third gate leads into the City of Dis, where a stern judge condemns the pilgrim to be cast into a dungeon. Thence comes escape across a bridge and a long journey up the Mountain of the Dawn, and so to the Holy City of the Gods, even into the shrine, where "our Master, Buddha, sits enthroned." The view from the pillar is clearly a dim remembrance of the view from the Mountain, or Pillar, of the Dawn, nor can we overlook the emphasis laid on Truth in view of the similar emphasis laid on this virtue in the Triad.

¹It must not be forgotten that the ritual of the Triad Society is also in verse.

²In this connection the importance of nine in multiples of three is significant. Compare Dante, also Odin, who served in the land of Jotunheim for 9 months. The door of the Lodge mark the entry into the Underworld.

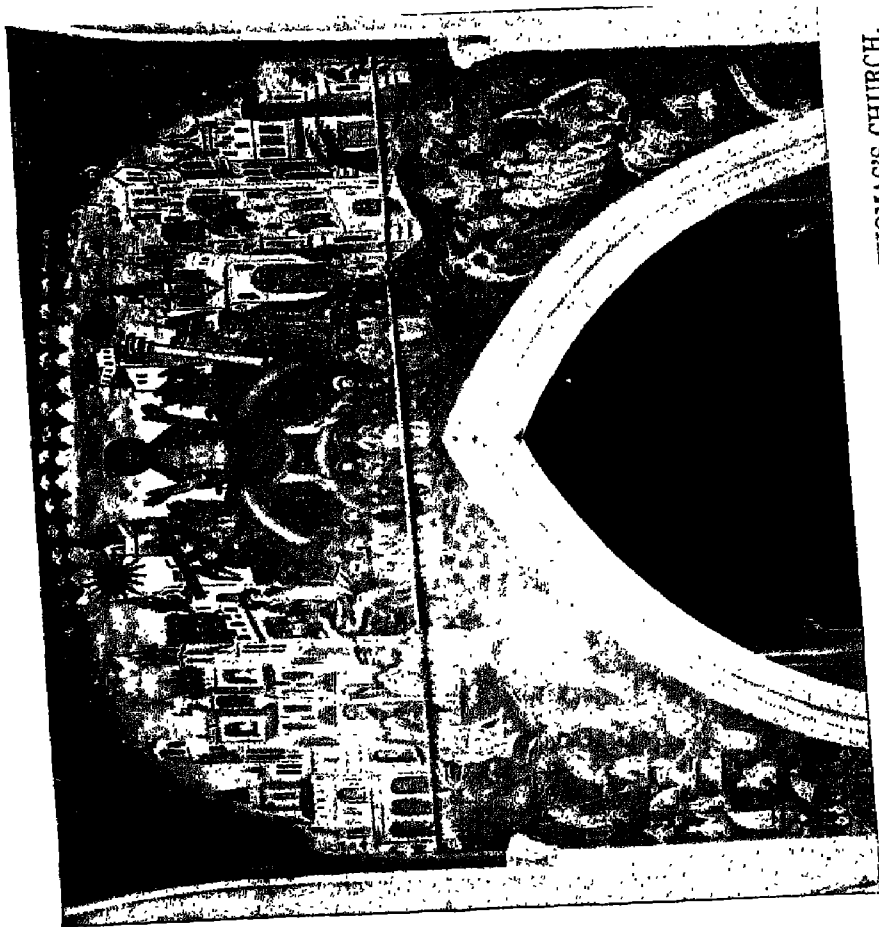
THE HUNG SOCIETY.

Finally, in degree G the darksome place of degree F plays a far more important part, and the manner in which the candidate is drawn forth therefrom reminds us of the way in which Avalokitesvara, the Kwan Yin of the Hung Rite, is supposed to rescue the souls in bondage. The washing which is found in the Hung ritual also appears in this degree, although for certain reasons not all members of the degree may recognise the fact.

The above are merely hints, and I have not attempted to draw the parallels too close lest thereby I disclose more than is necessary or justifiable, but I suggest that if the members of these Masonic degrees will compare them carefully with the Hung ceremony they will find far more points of correspondence than the mere landmarks to which I have drawn attention. I will go further, and say that practically the whole of the Higher Degrees, and even certain incidents in the Craft, can be discovered in this ancient Rite by discerning Masonic students, without the aid of more detailed information.



AN INSCRIPTION FROM THE CATACOMBS, SHOWING
THE BOAT OF THE SOUL AND "THE
TOWER OF REFRESHMENT."



A FRESCO OF THE LAST JUDGMENT FROM ST. THOMAS'S CHURCH,
SALISBURY.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A PURITAN VERSION OF THE TRIAD JOURNEY.



ET us now turn to Bunyan's allegory and see how carefully he has preserved the framework which we have detected as being the basis of the ritual of this Chinese secret Society concerning which he could, of course, have known nothing. Strangely enough he must have been writing his famous book at about the same date as the Chinese tradition gives for the foundation of the Hung Society, for Khang Hsi reigned from 1662—1728.

We have already seen that despite the Reformation, old traditions died hard in England, and that the one concerning the *Underworld* survived well into the 19th century, if, indeed, it is not still in existence. This fact will mitigate our surprise at finding the same framework in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. There is, however, one essential difference, due to the period and to the temperament of Bunyan. As a staunch Protestant, there was no room in his allegory for Purgatory or a journey therethrough. The Allegory has therefore become almost purely mystical, and as such is of the greatest value when we come to consider the mystical meaning of the Triad journey. Nevertheless, it is worth noticing that Bunyan, unlike many Protestants, does not believe that at death a man's soul sleeps. Christian enters Heaven as soon as he is dead, and Ignorance on being refused admission to Heaven is sent direct to Hell. When we come to consider the question of his attitude to the Last Judgment, we must conclude that since the dead had already been judged the Day of Doom concerned mainly those who were alive on that day. There is no hint of a resurrection of the physical body and its reunion with the soul, although he may have thought that his readers would naturally assume it.

The framework of his allegory is extraordinarily similar to those we have previously considered, and the question naturally arises as to how Bunyan came to use it when he and his contemporaries usually repudiated the underlying principles on which it is founded. Bunyan distinctly says he dreamed his allegory, and though we must allow for the poetic imagination of the visionary, I see no reason why we should not accept his statement as being in the main true. Indeed, it is more than probable that many of these stories are based on vision, but for all that, he, like other visionaries and seers, was subconsciously influenced by the traditions which still were current. Therefore, though the position of the country through which Christian travelled was above, and not below, the surface of the earth, and, despite a multiplicity of new details, based as a rule on Bible passages, the principle landmarks of the old tradition can be clearly discerned.

SUMMARY OF THE ESSENTIAL FEATURES.

1. The stepping stones in the Slough of Despond, which Christian failed to see, although placed too early in the journey, bring to mind the stepping stones of the Triad ceremony.

2. Mount Sinai, which nearly overwhelmed Christian, is the same as the Mountain of Sunset.

3. The Wicket Gate corresponds with the Gate of the Underworld.

4. The Middle Path, though narrow and not broad, nevertheless calls to mind the Middle Path chosen by the Vanguard.

5. The House of the Interpreter has striking similarities to the Hall of Judgment, particularly as depicted in the Underworld Abbey of St. Patrick's Purgatory. The lions remind us of Cerberus, or Garm, the Hell hound.

6. The Valley of Humiliation reproduces the darkness of the Underworld, and represents the Strand of the Underworld, or the first district, and the narrow causeway through the Valley of the Shadow of Death represents the Bridge over Hell in the Underworld. It has, indeed, a striking similarity with the causeway along which Yudishthira walked in the Hindu Legend, especially in the presence of fiends and of people who sat in affliction and in irons. On one side was a ditch and on the other a quagmire, and in the midst of the Valley was the mouth of Hell, from which issued flames and smoke. This last passage reminds us of the Pit of Hell itself, over which Sir Owayne passed. It is therefore the Middle Kingdom.

7. The Town of Vanity, or the City of Vanity Fair, is clearly Dis, or Hellheim, and we even have a debased form of Radamanthus, the stern Judge of the Dead, in the form of Lord Hate-Good, who condemned Faithful to a cruel death.

8. Having escaped from this "City of Dis" Christian returned to the still unpleasant, but not so dreadful, Middle Kingdom, which lay on the other side and included the so-called Silver Mine, into which Demas tried to lure pilgrims.

9. Christian and his companion passed out of this region into the district on the further side and saw the Underground River of Ocean, here named *The River of God*, or *The Waters of Life*. This allegory combines the further end of the Underworld Ocean with the mysterious Fountain of the Norns, or the fountain which reached into Heaven, in the Triad ritual. Like the Vanguard, Christian drank of this water and his thirst was quenched. But for all that, they were still amid the dangers of the Underworld, for they fell into the clutches of Giant Despair.

10. Their escape through the gates of Giant Despair into daylight and safety is clearly based on the idea of the soul coming into the upper world in the East, and the fact is emphasized by their escape taking place on Sunday morning, the same day as Dante began his ascent of the Mountain of Purgatory.

11. It is not surprising therefore that we next find the pilgrims climbing the Mountains of the Dawn, here called the Delectable Mountains. From these they saw the Golden City of Zion, afar off. This is the City of the Gods, on their Mountain, clearly visible from the Mountains of the Dawn, whose peaks are above the clouds, which latter hide the above ground River of Ocean, called by Bunyan, *The River of Death*, which Christian did not see. They also saw down into the underworld, including not only part of the first district, i.e., where the blinded prisoners of Giant Despair wandered, but even the Pit itself. "There was a door in the side of a hill . . . within it was dark and smoky . . . they heard there a rumbling noise, as of fire, and a cry of some tormented." They were told it was a byway to Hell.¹ They then descended to the plain of the Earthly Paradise which was divided into two areas, (a) The Enchanted Land, and (b) The Country of Beulah. This is the true Paradise, and the description of it is very similar to that given in St. Patrick's Purgatory. Like Sir Owayne they met holy people here, and from it saw more clearly the Celestial City, but discovered that it was separated from them by a wide river.

12. They come to the River, which is here the River of Physical Death, but, no doubt, is based on the River of Ocean across which the Gods went on the Rainbow Bridge. This bridge is not mentioned.

13. The pilgrims had to wade the river and had not even the stepping stones which the Vanguard and the Hung Heroes had specially provided for them. On reaching the further shore they found themselves at the foot of a mountain, and discovered that the city stood on the top thereof. This is, of course, the Mountain of the Gods, on the summit of which was Asgard.

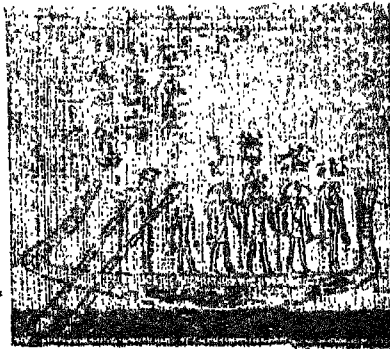
14. They reached the Golden City and passed through its gates.

15. Though there was no bridge in Bunyan's vision, there was a ferry boat, manned by Vain-Hope, by means of which Ignorance passed over very comfortably, only, however, to be rejected at the gates of Heaven and sent to Hell.

Thus we see that the Pilgrims, like the Hung heroes, had to refuse to cross by the bridge, here represented by the ferry, and, like them, waded the river. The fear of the Vanguard at attempting to cross the bridge is thus paralleled, and in a sense justified, by Bunyan's Vision. The Magic Mirror also appears in the later section, where it is desired by one of the daughters of Christian, and the Magic Sword is represented by the true Jerusalem blade of Valliant. In this section it is clear that by Beulah, Bunyan meant, *Old Age*. Without attempting to go into the mystical aspect of the *Pilgrim's Progress* we have been able to see that the age-old tradition is still preserved therein, together with numerous additional incidents similar to those in the Triad Ritual. Yet no one, we think, would venture to say that either copied from the other, and

¹This incident forcibly reminds us of the Fiery Furnace, which the Vanguard says is in the side of a mountain and to which the Hung Candidates' attention is directed. See Vol. I. p. 100.

the explanation is clearly that they both drew on a common, and very ancient tradition. That tradition, I have ventured to suggest, was none other than the history of the Soul's experiences after death. So far as England is concerned, we have seen that this tradition comes down by a regular line of descent through the Middle Ages, and that it is not yet extinct is shown by the survival of the same frame-work in certain Masonic degrees, as indicated in the previous chapter, and also in numerous fairy tales still current in Europe, of which *The King of the Golden Mountain* may be regarded as a typical example. In this connection it is interesting to study the Memorial to those who fell in the late War, set up at Whichford Church, Warwickshire, wherein St. George is depicted guarding the Bridge which leads to the City of Heaven.^(a)



THE BOAT OF RA.

(a) See illus. op. p. 188.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE KING OF THE GOLDEN MOUNTAIN.



HIS story occurs in Grimm's Fairy Tales and in its present form is 18th century in date, though it undoubtedly comes down from a long distant past. It is of importance to us here, since it shows how long this ancient tradition survived among the peasantry of Europe, while the prominent part played by the "Hung Boat" is most significant. A merchant, who had lost all his money owing to the shipwreck of two vessels in which he had invested it, was wandering disconsolate through the fields when he met a little, dark man,¹ who offered to give him as much money as ever he required if he would promise that whatever came first to meet him on his return home, and rubbed itself against his knees, should be brought to that spot in twelve years time.² The merchant thought, "my dog is the only one who can do that," and agreed, but when he returned home his little son toddled towards him and caught him by the knees.

When the twelve years were over the father had to tell his son of the fate which awaited him. The boy showed no fear but went to a clergyman and asked him for his blessing.³ When father and son reached the fatal spot the boy made a cross on the ground and he and his father stood on it.⁴ The boy refused to acknowledge the claim of the "little, dark man" and, on the other hand, had to admit that his father had lost all right to him. It was therefore agreed that he "should place himself in a little ship,"⁵ and that his father should with his own foot push it away, that the boy might be given up to the water.⁶

"Then he took leave of his father and stepped into the ship; his father pushed it off with his foot, when it turned over so that the keel was uppermost, and the father, believing that his son was lost, went home and mourned for him deeply.⁷ The little ship, however, did not sink but righted itself again,

¹The little dark man is a gnome, a dweller in the Underworld—the realm of the dead. Compare with the fate of Jephthah's daughter.

²The repeated references to 12 show the astrological and solar nature of the tale.

³A Protestant substitute for saying that he went and confessed and received final absolution.

⁴As related, the cross seems to be made as a protection, against which the powers of the Underworld can do nothing, but the fact that the boy, after all, has to start on the long journey shows that originally he was sacrificed on the cross, either symbolically or actually. Masons will remember the pacing out of a similar symbol just before a certain great and final trial.

⁵The Solar Barque. This is the first time in the story that we hear of the little ship. Note the boy enters it after he has been on the cross.

⁶He is thus sacrificed after all, but to the water and not to the Underworld.

⁷Thus the father *did* sacrifice his son in fulfilment of his vow.

and the boy clung to it closely. At length it reached an unknown shore and immediately became fast."¹ On landing he saw a wonderful castle, but as soon as he entered it he felt that he was in a sorcerer's power.² The castle was empty save for a huge snake, who proved to be a bewitched maiden. She told him that she had been waiting for him for twelve years,³ and that he must deliver her and the land from its enchantment. The boy naturally asked how he could do this, and the serpent maiden replied:—

"To-night there will come here 12 dark men⁴ bearing chains and fetters, who will ask you what you are doing here. Then must you be silent and not answer a word in reply; let them do what they will to you. They will beat you and torment you dreadfully; but, whatever happens, do not speak, and at 12 o'clock they will be obliged to go away. To-morrow night, another twelve men will come, and on the third night twenty-four.⁵ These last will cut off your head; but at 12 o'clock, if you have not spoken a word during the three nights, their power is over and I am free.⁶ Then I shall be able to restore you to life,⁷ for I have a bottle of water⁸ which can cure everything, and if I touch you with this you will soon be well."

The boy agreed to do as she had directed, and as a result the princess was restored to her true form. She raised her rescuer to life again; the two were married, and he became the King of the Golden Mountain. After eight years he wished to return to earth and, though loth to let him go, the princess consented. His subsequent misadventures showed that he was no longer of this world, and on his return to the Golden Mountain he had to reconquer⁹ his kingdom, which, however, he succeeded in doing.

This story is clearly a somewhat distorted version of the journey of the Sun in its barque to the West, and thence Underground, back to the Golden Dawn.

¹Either the land of Sunset or of the Dawn; we shall discuss which it is later.

²He is in the Underworld and the power of the King thereof is upon him.

³Namely, from the time when the little, dark man exacted the promise from the merchant, no doubt it was for this very purpose that he obtained the boy. Here the boy represents the Sun, the 12 years are the twelve hours of daylight, and his coming symbolises the descent of the Sun into the Underworld at night.

⁴Compare with the 12 houses of the Tuat in Egypt, through which the Solar Barque had to force its way despite the opposition of evil monsters.

⁵Compare the twelve double hours' journey of Gilgamesh through the darkness, in the Babylonian story.

⁶Compare with the three days during which Christ was in the Underworld and harrowed Hell, and thereby set free those who were in bondage. With regard to the beheading, compare the incidents related of Lancelot in the *High History* and the *Legend of Cuchalan*.

⁷We thus have the death of the Sun and his resurrection on the third day.

⁸The Fountain of Living Water, the Waters of Life, etc., which are in the Earthly Paradise. Compare the fountain from which the Vanguard said he drank (See Vol. I, p. 96).

⁹The revolt of the people of the Golden Mountain and the equivocal conduct of his once devoted wife are easily explained by the fact that once the Sun had left that region the powers of darkness again exercised sway until the Sun returned to overthrow them. In Germany the shortest night is about eight hours, during which the Sun is absent in the Underworld,

To a lesser extent it is also an allegory of the adventures of a soul which accompanies the Sun. It is possible that we have here a faint remembrance of some primitive initiatory rite which included a symbolical, if not an actual, human sacrifice, and taught of the adventures of the Soul in the Underworld and its resurrection in Paradise. There seem, however, to be traces of two deaths, the first connected with the cross and with a watery grave, and the second, a mythological one, at a later point in the legend. It is possible that the first represents physical death and the second the death of the astral form.

It is noteworthy that the Solar Barque reaches land and there our hero disembarks, the rest of his adventures occurring while he is on foot and, apparently, in a castle, which may represent the city of Dis. The place where the ship grounds is of interest; it seems probable that it represents the Land of Sunset, while when the boy has died and risen again he finds himself in the Earthly Paradise, which was situated in the East, amid the Mountains of the Dawn, which might most suitably be called *The Kingdom of the Golden Mountain*. It must not be forgotten that the Underworld in folk-lore is essentially a land of illusions and enchantments, and therefore the fact that apparently the castle in which he finds the princess, and where he is slain, seems also to be the castle where he is subsequently crowned King, need not perturb us, although they should be different, the more so as the whole story is, after all, an allegory. The tale, however, is of considerable interest as, with the exception of the clergyman and the cross, it is untouched by Christianity, and clearly represents an old solar and pre-Christian myth which has survived as a "fairy tale" down to the end of the 18th century.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE ANCIENT TRADITION ON MODERN CONCEPTIONS OF THE AFTER LIFE.



WE have seen how the tradition of what befalls man after death has its origin in a total misconception of the true shape of the world, and to many the thought must have occurred, "Is then all this labour vain? Are all the Rites the vapourings of children, false and meaningless to us to-day? Are the mighty lines of Dante just beautiful words and nothing more?" For my part I do not believe it. I suggest that, though the conception of the physical shape of the world out of which it grew is wrong, yet the tradition itself does, in a large measure, correspond with the facts of the case, and that the old tradition has been kept alive, and strengthened, because all down the ages prophets and seers have from time to time obtained glimpses of the hereafter, in which the spiritual state of man corresponded sufficiently nearly to the old tradition for them to find it possible, by using it as an allegory, to convey to less gifted mortals some dim idea of the hereafter. On this, which to human beings is one of the most important problems of life, modern science can give no clearer answer than can the primitive races of New Guinea. Indeed, it gives no answer at all, and even religion speaks with faltering and conflicting accents, very different from the precise and clear-cut answer it gave in the Middle Ages.

Among modern Christians there is the utmost diversity of opinion on this subject, and I propose to set out here the views held by characteristic sections, although it must be clearly understood that the average man often has no definite views at all, and even when he renders lip service to one of the recognised beliefs on the subject he often does so with little real conviction.

THE EXTREME PROTESTANT VIEW.

There recently came into my hands a pretentious printed document entitled, "Ecclesiastics Indicted—Civilization Doomed." It informs us that it was ratified at a "Convention of Bible Students . . . assembled at Columbus, Ohio, July 20th, 1924," which was presided over by Judge Rutherford. It is not very pleasant reading, for it seems sadly lacking in all sense of Christian charity, and grossly unfair in its sweeping accusations against the clergy of other forms of Christian religion, of whom it is not necessary to declare

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that "they have used their spiritual powers . . . to gratify their own selfish desires" even if one does not agree with what they believe. However, the document is of value as stating in unequivocal terms what this strongly Protestant body considers befalls man at death. In Section (6) of this so-called "Indictment" occurs the following:—

"The Bible teaches that the wages of sin is death; that hell is the state of death or the tomb; that the dead are unconscious until the resurrection; and that the ransom sacrifice is provided that all in time may have an opportunity to believe and obey the Lord and live, while the wilfully wicked are to be punished with an everlasting destruction."

Now this is clear and categorical, and to a student of comparative religions it is most interesting, for in its general conception it is pure Mahommedanism. I must admit, however, that I cannot find any foundation for such a view in the Bible, on the authority of which it is supposed to be based, and it seems in direct conflict with Our Lord's own teaching in the story of Dives and Lazarus (S. Luke 16, verses 19-21), for therein we are distinctly told that the rich man was in hell and was in torment, whereas Lazarus was also fully conscious in "Abraham's bosom." Moreover, it is clear that the day of Judgment had not yet come, for the rich man asks that Lazarus may be sent to his father's house "that he may testify unto them lest they also come into this place of torment" The passage in St. Peter^(a) wherein we are told that Christ, after his death, "went and preached unto the spirits which were in prison" seems also to contradict completely the view that the souls are unconscious from death until Judgment Day. Nevertheless we are not concerned at the moment with whether such beliefs are truly based on the Scriptures or not, it is sufficient to know that there exists a considerable number of Christians who hold that the soul is not in itself immortal, that at death it sinks into oblivion, and is raised on the Judgment Day, either to enter into bliss or to be condemned to utter destruction.

Such views, however, are held by quite a small section of the avowed Christians in the world. A large number hold that at death the good go straight to heaven, there to be with God. As to what befalls the wicked, they are less certain; generally they hold that they go to Hell; that after death there is no possibility of readjustment. Judgment Day, to them, is but little more than a formal ratification of a foregone conclusion. To such people man is essentially immortal and his bliss or woe are everlasting. A large section of the Protestant Nonconformists hold this view, and it seems to have been this conception which influenced Bunyan in his allegory of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Some of the Low Church party in the Church of England also agree with them on this point, but the High Church Anglicans hold views very similar to those of the Roman Catholic Church, with whose beliefs the Greek Church is largely in accord.

(a) I. St. Peter, 8. 19.

ANGLICAN AND ROMAN CATHOLIC BELIEFS.

So far as numbers go, their view may be considered as the one most largely held among Christians, although there are minor differences of opinion on certain details, such as whether punishment in Hell is eternal. In practice it will be found that most High Church Anglicans incline to the belief that although the place, or state, of Hell may be eternal, we are not justified in assuming that any individual sinner will remain there for ever. This outlook may be summarised as follows:—At death man, if very bad, passes to Hell; moderately bad people go to Purgatory; good people to Paradise, and a few “saints” to Heaven itself. At the Day of Judgment, the bad will be confirmed in their doom in Hell and their anguish automatically increased. Purgatory and Paradise, having fulfilled their task of purging and cleansing those not utterly bad from all trace of their former sins, will pass away, and all not condemned to Hell will enter into Heaven, there to abide for ever.

As orthodox Christianity does not endorse belief in reincarnation, there is no outlet for spirits to return by rebirth to earth, such as one finds in Buddhist conceptions, and this means that Hell is a place from whence there is no escape. I have already indicated, however, that there is a strong tendency among some to hold that even Hell is more in the nature of an intensified Purgatory than of a place of everlasting woe. We have still, however, to consider a recent development of thought which, in its main essentials, conforms with the old tradition and gives a logical modern basis to it, but removes certain ideas to which the modern mind reasonably takes exception, notably the idea that Hell is eternal. This conception I will designate as the Spiritualist-Theosophical view, and although not accepted by many orthodox Churchmen is, nevertheless, held by a considerable section of the community, and therefore cannot be ignored in a work such as this.

THE SPIRITUALIST AND THEOSOPHICAL VIEW.

It must be frankly admitted that many spiritualists seem to be more interested in obtaining messages of a purely personal nature from their dead relations, than in endeavouring to obtain detailed information as to the conditions of life beyond the grave. Nor can it be denied that much of the so-called evidence given in support of the claim of a certain entity, that it is really some particular individual, is far from convincing. The whole problem, indeed, is most complex, and while the easiest method for dealing with it is to dismiss it as “fraud,” honest and scientific investigators have decided that whatever may be the ultimate conclusions they reach, “fraud,” in the sense of deliberate and conscious fraud, will not explain *all* the phenomena. Fortunately, it is not necessary for us to come to any decision on this subject. Our task here is to place on record the beliefs of various races in different stages of spiritual development, and whether we think them mistaken or not does not enter into



THE MEMORIAL IN WHICHFORD CHURCH.

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the case. Our work is defined and limited to a consideration of the beliefs which form the framework of the Triad ritual, namely, the supposed journey of the soul after death.

The more scientific Spiritualists have undoubtedly in part been influenced by Theosophical thought or, perhaps, it would be more correct to say that their conclusions, from the evidence available, coincide up to a certain point with similar conclusions formed by Theosophists. While the beliefs which follow would not be accepted by all Spiritualists or Theosophists, they would be admitted by a very large section, and those who deviate from them do so owing to the fact that they are still consciously, or subconsciously, influenced by the beliefs which they have inherited from the orthodox churches.

The views of the Spiritualist-Theosophical group are then as follows:—

Man is a complex being and the Divine Spark, or Spirit, is encased in many shells. The grossest of these shells is the physical body (*corpus*), which is discarded at death, only to reveal another, the astral body. This is still material, but of a more refined matter than the physical body. As gas is to solid matter, so is the astral to the physical body. Immediately after death this astral body is far more grossly material than it is a few hours later, and it is distinctly perishable. In appearance it is similar to the form of the man at death, and during life it interpenetrates the physical form, even at times extending beyond it. It is the vehicle by which the spirit controls the nerves, the brain, and ultimately the physical body: it is attached to the physical body by a kind of cord, "the silver cord," but during the process of dying this cord gradually shreds away to a few fine hairs until when this weak, physical life finally ends, the astral body floats free of the physical.

In the case of a person who dies of old age, or after a long illness, this gradual disintegration of the astral cord has been going on for some time, and the final severance causes but little shock to the astral body, but in the case of a sudden death by accident, murder, suicide or war, the shock is often severe and separation is not always at once complete. Therefore the astral body for a time remains entangled with the corpse and suffers intense agony. This is particularly the case with a suicide, who thus brings upon himself an immediate and terrible retribution. The severance of the astral cord is supposed to be alluded to in the last chapter of Ecclesiastes—"When the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl is broken, and the pitcher is broken at the fountain." The pitcher is interpreted as the physical body, the silver cord as the astral cord, which links the astral body, or golden bowl, with the physical body. The breaking of the golden bowl in like manner represents the disintegration of the astral body, which marks the entry of the dead man to the Spirit plane, or plane of the form, to which we shall refer shortly.

At death the astral form shakes itself free from the physical body and finds itself still on earth, but on an earth which, being material, it can but dimly see, because it is not used to employing its astral faculties. Until now it has used

its physical eyes, and so at first finds itself in a dark and misty landscape, incoherent and ill-discerned. Thus it is said to be in darkness, and this stage corresponds with the passage through the Underworld. In point of earth time, this period is often said to last for three days, and the earliest experience is that depicted by the ghosts waiting on the strand to cross the river. Even the hunger for proper burial is not altogether untrue, for the astral hangs round the physical corpse until it perceives that the body is really dead and buried. At this point it is often met by other astral beings, who receive it and try to explain what conditions of life on the astral plane are like. This episode corresponds with the spirits who, according to the beliefs of the New Guinea natives, come to meet the dead man. If the deceased has lived a good life and quickly responds to the new conditions, he passes to a pleasant sphere, i.e., the Earthly Paradise, but if he has lived an evil life he draws to him evil companions and tries to haunt the physical world. He regrets the loss of a physical body, hungers after physical needs, food, drink and so forth,—and may even be actuated by evil passions. In such cases he creates around himself an atmosphere of an exceedingly unpleasant type. He tries to reproduce earth life, and only produces a shadow thereof, which mocks and exasperates him: he strives to satisfy fleshly longings, and fails to do so! This is Purgatory.

The good soul, on the contrary, soon loses his desire for physical joys and turns to higher things, and in consequence draws around him other good astral beings. The landscape he sees is real but astral, that is to say, all physical objects have an astral as well as a physical body. The astral body of man is not pure spirit, but in a good man it is more responsive to the dictates of the spirit than was his physical body, and his surroundings are those which he draws to himself. On the other hand, the spirit of an evil man is also more able to control his astral body, which inevitably attracts to him evil beings and things; hence his surroundings are evil. After a period the astral bodies of good and bad alike wear out, for their "life" is closely connected with the age of the physical body. Thus, if a young man dies, his time on the astral plane is much longer than that of an old man, whose astral body has worn out, as has his physical body. It must never be forgotten that the astral body is material, though of a refined matter.

Sooner or later, to all astral beings, comes the second death. The spirit departs from the astral form, which disintegrates, and both type of beings pass to the Spirit Plane, or Plane of Form, but the evil enter Hell and the good the lower Heavens. Hell is a state, not a place, but as the man is now only a form, his own imaginings may create around him a veritable objective Hell; since like attracts like, all those around him are thinking cruel or evil thoughts, and the thought forms they produce build up a hell of evil forms. This Hell is permanent so long as there are evil men to bring forth evil thought forms (or dreams), but if any individual therein turns from thinking evil to thinking good, he will gradually rise from this state to the state of goodness we called the

lower Heavens. Just as men's evil natures vary in intensity, so there are various Hells and, in like manner, there are higher and lower Heavens. These Heavens are not, however, the dwelling place of God, Who is still far hence. The more highly evolved a man is the more spiritual will be his surroundings, and so, in a sense, we create our own Heaven and Hell. But it must not be forgotten that since like attracts like men in a similar stage of spiritual evolution will tend to draw together, and their united thoughts will produce a definite type of heaven, or place of existence.

Up to this point belief is fairly uniform on the subject, but there comes a stage when even form itself is left behind, and this is often a sore trial to the deceased; he cannot understand how his personality can survive if he loses his "form." The passing from the form state to one higher is marked by a further death; the form perishes and, according to many, the majority return to be reborn on earth and start a new cycle of experiences, although a few highly evolved entities go on up the spiritual ladder towards the High Heavens themselves, the dwelling place of the Supreme Being, where they will unite with Him and so obtain peace. This, the highest stage, is represented in Dante by the Rose of the Blessed, and in Buddhism by Nirvana. For the ordinary man, however, the Celestial City, or the fair meads of the lower Heavens, which are inhabited by the spiritual forms of those who lived on earth, is as high as he can attain, or even desire to go.

Thus the City of Willows represents the lower Heavens, the bridge is an allegory of the passing from the astral plane, i.e., the Isles of the Blest, to the Spirit plane, and the journey in the boat is an allegory of the transition period after death, before the soul has become accustomed to its astral state and learned to function therein. If we compare this belief with that of the old tradition, we shall see that it fits in remarkably.

The strand of the Underworld denotes the period of waiting on earth until the body is buried and all earth ties are broken. The journey through the darkness denotes the darkness which surrounds the astral, until it has learned to function in the astral world. The crossing of the bridge *into* the Underworld corresponds with the shedding of the grosser material elements of the astral body, which becomes much more ethereal after death. The glimpses of the Underworld are just such glimpses of the evil side of the astral plane as a good man gets before he finally settles down among congenial surroundings in the higher, and better, stages of astral existence. These higher stages correspond to the Elysian Fields, or Earthly Paradise, in the East, beyond the Mountains of the Dawn. The Rainbow Bridge, which connects Paradise with the City of the Gods, is the passing from the astral body into the spiritual body, or form. This leads to the spirit plane, called the City of the Gods.

The course followed by an evil man also fits well into the old tradition. He, too, comes to the strand and, since his earth longings are far stronger than those of the good man, this strand is a place of black misery. He hangs round

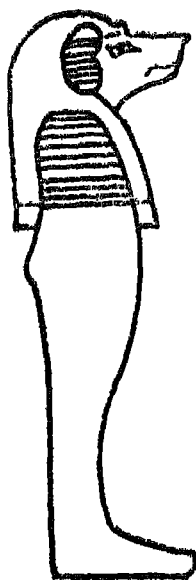
his empty corpse, unable to re-enter it, and after its burial sheds some of his more material elements, but not his animal desires. Therefore the bridge leads him into the Middle Kingdom of the Underworld, the dark places of the astral plane. If here he fails to turn to better things, in time he, too, loses his astral body and becomes a spirit form. This event is marked by his entering the gateway of the Judgment Hall (in some accounts described as having a draw-bridge) and so passing into the Pit of Hell. Even the story of the descent of a God, or Angel, into Hell is vouched for by the spiritualists, who aver that good Spirits from Heaven (the plane of Light) descend to preach to those who, blinded by their own sin, seem lost to better things, and they believe that such messengers often touch a cord in the hearts of the evil, which responds and causes them to climb upwards towards the Light. Finally, the act of passing from the form plane, and back by rebirth to earth, is marked by some event which destroys, or at least submerges, the memory of the last life, and this is often described as *drinking of the waters of forgetfulness*. Herein we have the counterpart to Virgil's Water of Lethe, and the cup given to the candidate in the Three Dots Brotherhood.^(a)

The ordinary spiritualist does not hope to probe beyond the barrier which cuts off the plane of form from that above. He is content to learn what he can concerning those stages through which man must pass for some time after death, but the theosophist envisages further planes, with which, however, we are not now concerned. It is sufficient for our purpose to point out that if this theory is correct, any true visions seen by seers or prophets would naturally reinforce this tradition, strengthen its hold on men's minds, and, in a way, would really and truly bear witness in support of the allegory. Since, moreover, the mystic considers that the important events in a man's life here and hereafter are, as it were, in themselves an allegory of the mystical experiences through which the soul passes, while still in the flesh, it naturally follows that the more they believed this allegory really represented what befell us after death, the more they would regard it as a fitting vehicle for conveying the higher mystical teaching. So let us leave the framework of the Hung Ceremony. We have traced it from the dim red dawn of man among different races, and at different periods of time, and have found that even to-day, to some, at any rate, it gives a very fair picture of what happens to man after death. If we merely mention the names of a few of the great thinkers and poets who have condescended to use this tradition, and of the works they have produced, we shall perceive that we owe to it some of the greatest literary works in the history of man.

Homer and Virgil, the Mahabharata and Arnold, Dante and Mallory, Bunyan and Tennyson, are alike beholden to this age-old tradition. Lucian laughed at it; the Mediæval writers revelled in it; the Ancient Mysteries enacted it; modern Freemasonry perpetuates it; while far away, in China, the greatest Secret Society in the world uses it as the foundation of its ritual. It is a long

(a) See Volume III. chap. xviii.

journey from the primitive head-hunting cannibals of New Guinea to Dante or Bunyan, and yet to all alike this framework is not merely familiar, but is a guiding light, a rope let down into the darkness, a promise of life to come. Like a golden thread, it runs through the Ancient Mysteries, teaching men to die in the sure and certain hope of the Resurrection; it illumines the pages of Mediæval romance; it is a solace and comfort to a Puritan tinker locked in Bedford jail, and even to-day it proclaims in no uncertain language that the impossible is possible, that amid the utter darkness of despair there is a golden cord which "draws as with a rope" men from Darkness into Light.



HAPI
(A SON OF HORUS).

CHAPTER XXVII.

CONCLUSION.



THE numerous examples of legends and beliefs which deal with what befalls the soul after death given in this volume are sufficient to prove that the main framework of the Hung ritual deals with this important subject. We have seen that although the ritual itself is coloured by beliefs peculiar to the Taoists and Buddhists of China, yet they themselves are working on a framework which is common to almost every race under the sun. It is not necessary therefore to labour the point any further, and we can now turn to consider another aspect of the ritual, namely, its mystical interpretation. We have said that the allegory of the journey of the soul also forms an important part in most mystical teaching, and is found thus used in Western Rites as well as in the Far East. But although it forms an important part it does not constitute the complete mystical allegory, and it is therefore incumbent on us to see whether parts of the mystical allegory which symbolically precede the descent into Hell and the Mystic Resurrection, are not also represented in the ceremonies of the Hung Society.

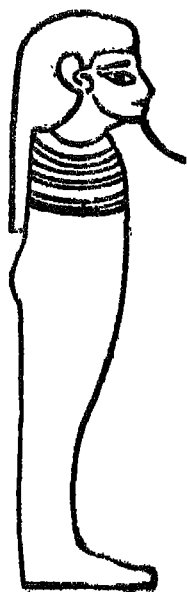
One important item in the mystical allegory is the descent of the soul, or, better still, of the Divine Spark, from God and its entry into the material universe, which is represented by a fall from light, an expulsion from Eden, or some similar incident which depicts the soul as an outcast, wandering, lost and miserable, among strange surroundings, but ever seeking to return whence it came. If, therefore, the Hung ritual is at all a complete mystical allegory, we may expect to find traces of this idea somewhere in the ceremony. This we do in the Traditional History, where there are clear indications of that part of the allegory which may best be described as, *the Loss of Eden*.

Before dealing with this aspect of the problem, however, there are still a number of details deserving of careful study. Some of them are remnants of old magical practices which, although they may now have been turned into symbolic actions, are nevertheless of value as ancient landmarks, indicating the primeval antiquity of the ceremony itself. Others, such as the scales and the grave-money, constitute an additional proof that the journey of the Vanguard deals with the journey of the soul. Finally, there are some incidents which indicate that from a very early date there must have been an inner, mystical meaning attached to the whole of the ceremony, and thus form valuable evidence in support of this explanation of the religious purposes of the Society itself.

Among the definitely mystical references one of the most striking is the symbolic use of numbers, which in the West plays such an important part in Rosicrucian teaching, and is by no means lacking in Freemasonry itself. It is, indeed, extraordinarily interesting to see how often the Far East agrees with Western Europe in attaching the same symbolical meaning to certain numbers, such as 3, 5, and 7. So striking are the parallels that many students may consider that these alone would be sufficient to prove some direct connection between the two systems, perhaps through an intermediary which has now perished. Such an explanation is perfectly permissible, but it is too early to state it as a definite fact, since it is possible that this symbolic interpretation is, as it were, inherent in man, and that as soon as he began to think about spiritual things he naturally attached the idea of Creation to the Father, Who became identified with the symbol "1". By marriage the one obviously became two, and since the Mother preserved the child, the number "2" would become attached to her, whereas the child itself, being naturally the third person in the family, most obviously was symbolised by the number "3". From an earthly trinity to a heavenly trinity was a perfectly natural process, and thus we arrive at the Chinese Trinity of Heaven, Earth and Man. Such arguments are valid, and it is possible they may be extended, although it is less easy to find an explanation for the agreement between East and West in ascribing to the number 3, birth, or creation: to the number 5, life, or preservation: and to the number 7, death, or transmutation. It is, therefore, wisest not to be too dogmatic on the subject, and while noting the parallels to leave future events and discoveries to decide which explanation is the correct one.

In conclusion, it may be added that there are many little phrases in the Hung ritual which may be capable of a mystical, or even an occult, significance, such as, for example, the term "Elder Brothers," which, although clearly possessing a practical interpretation, as meaning the Masters and Past Masters of a Hung Lodge, may once, at any rate, have referred to beings far higher in the scale of spiritual evolution. We must not forget that the ritual is permeated with Buddhist and Taoists beliefs, and both these religions speak of evolved men who, having reached a stage of spiritual development approximating to a semi-divine nature, are believed to take a hand in the ordering of this mundane world, and to act, as it were, as Overseers, inspiring and helping their less evolved brethren on earth to advance towards the Light. Alien as such beliefs are to many in the West they are not unknown here, as is proved by the prayers offered to the Saints, and they are very usual in India and China. Thus we should fail in our task, which is that of explaining the full significance of the Hung ceremony, if we did not make at least passing reference to this possible meaning.

Thus Volume III will fall into two parts, the first will deal with a number of incidents which occur in the ceremony itself, and which are interesting because of their magical or mystical significance, while the second half of the book will be devoted to an attempt to apply a mystical interpretation to the whole ritual, in the process of which it will be shown that even some of the apparent inconsistencies become perfectly explicable when we apply the mystical key.



MESTA
(A SON OF HORUS).

